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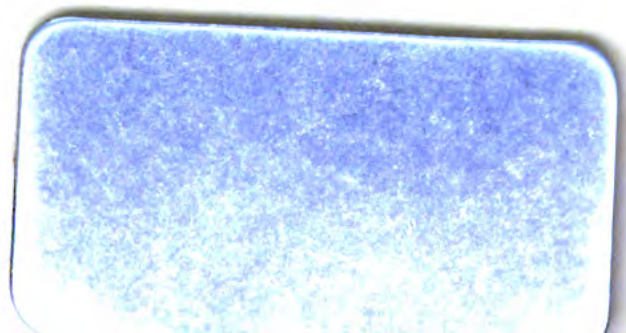
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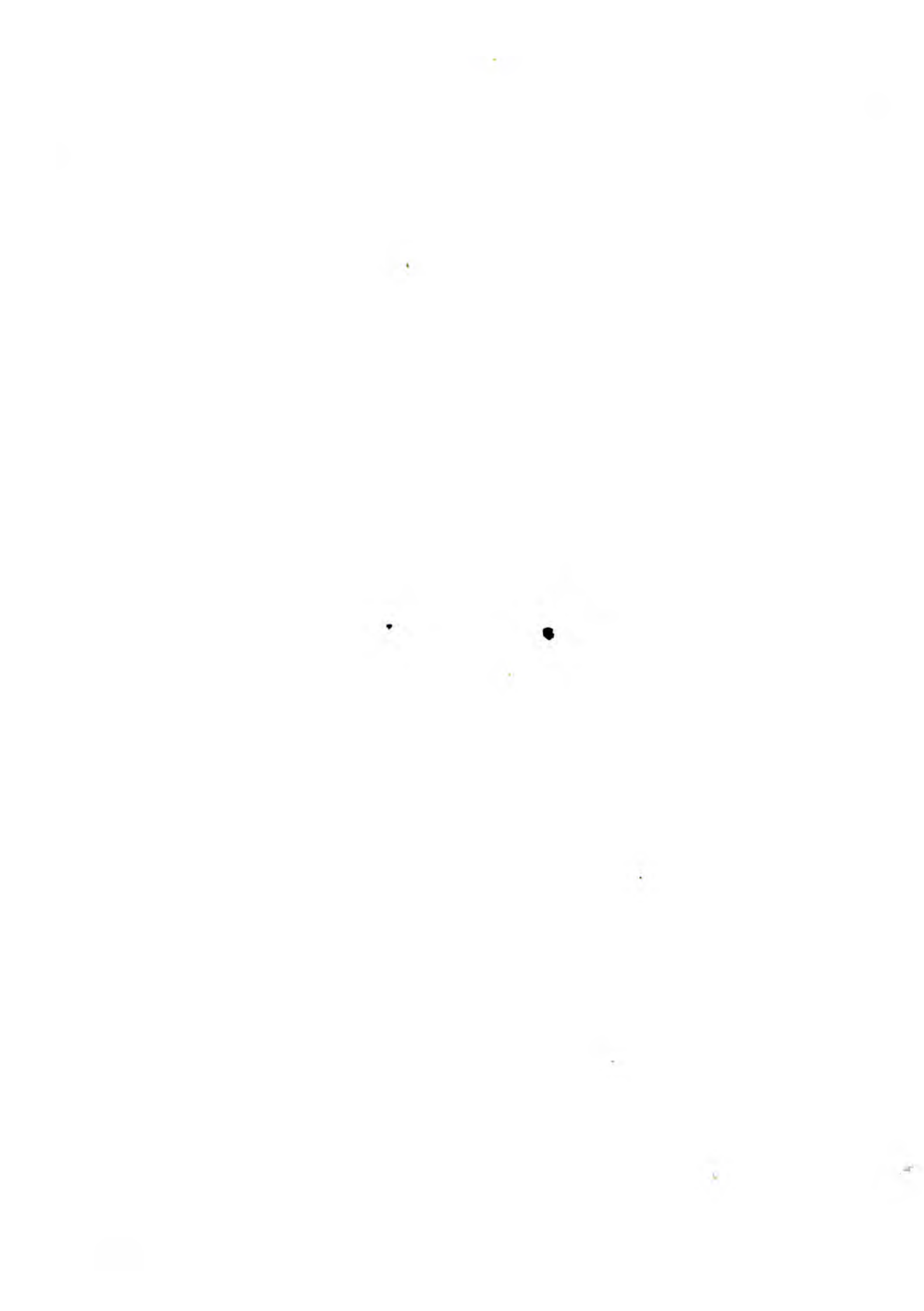


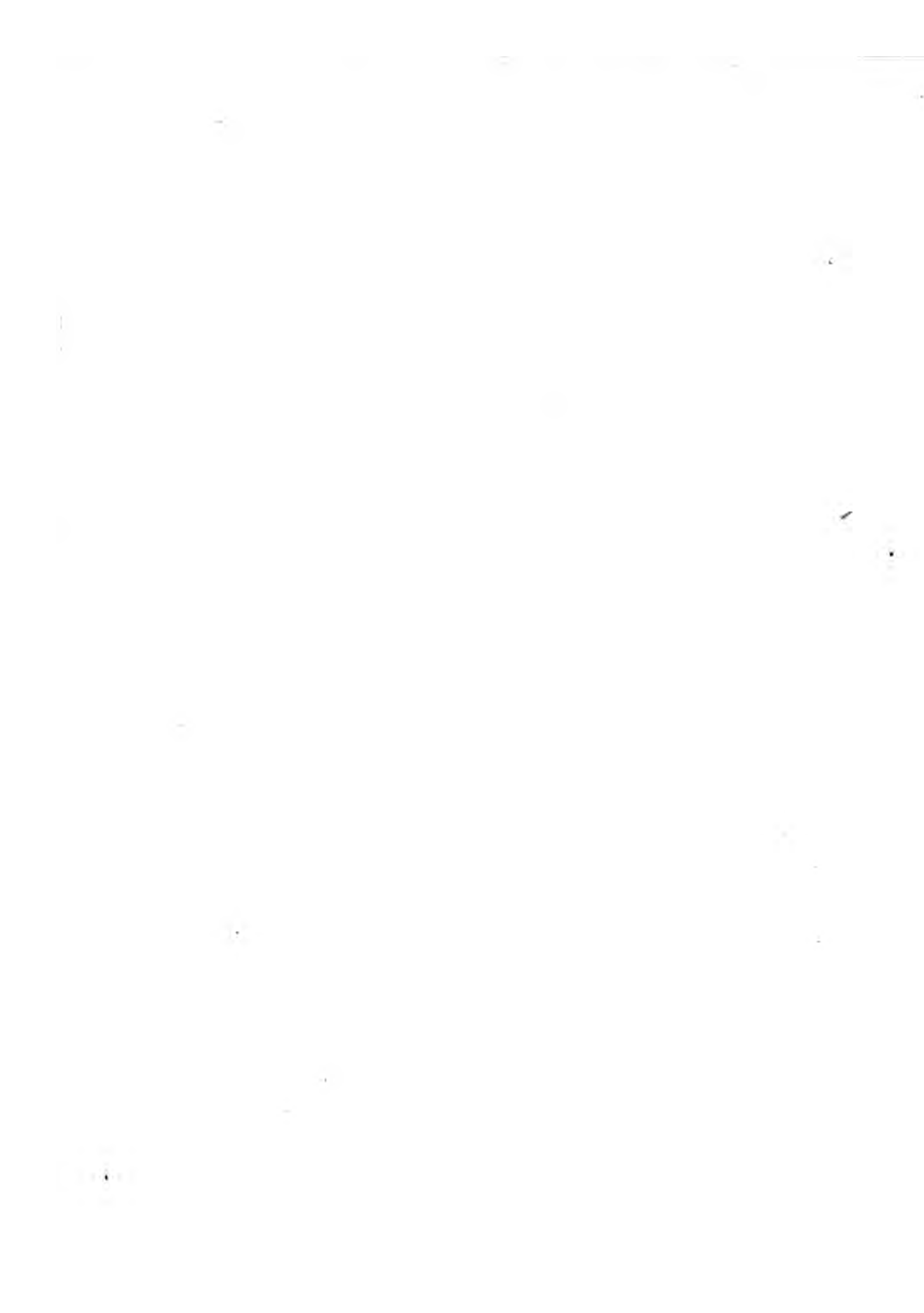
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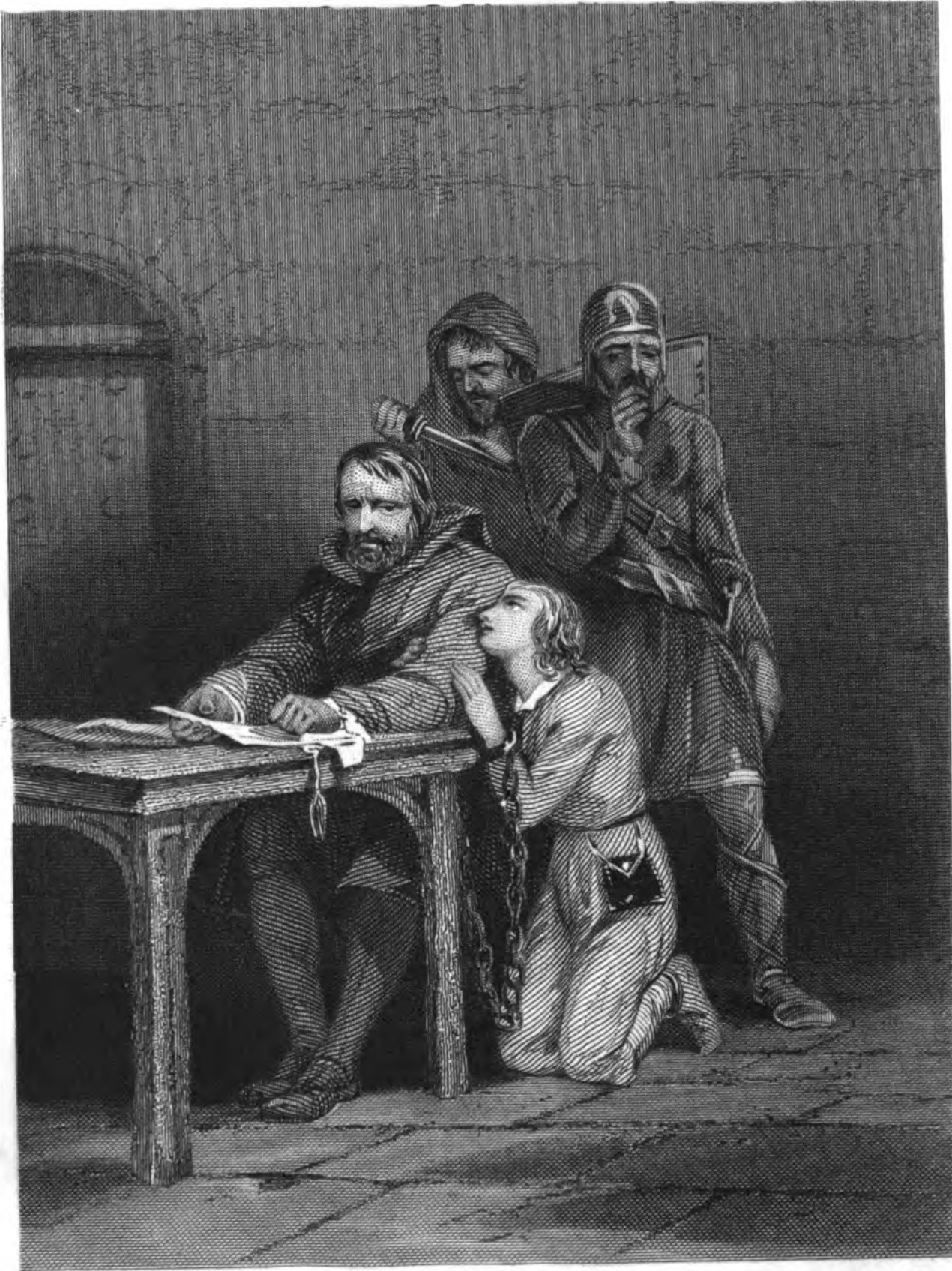


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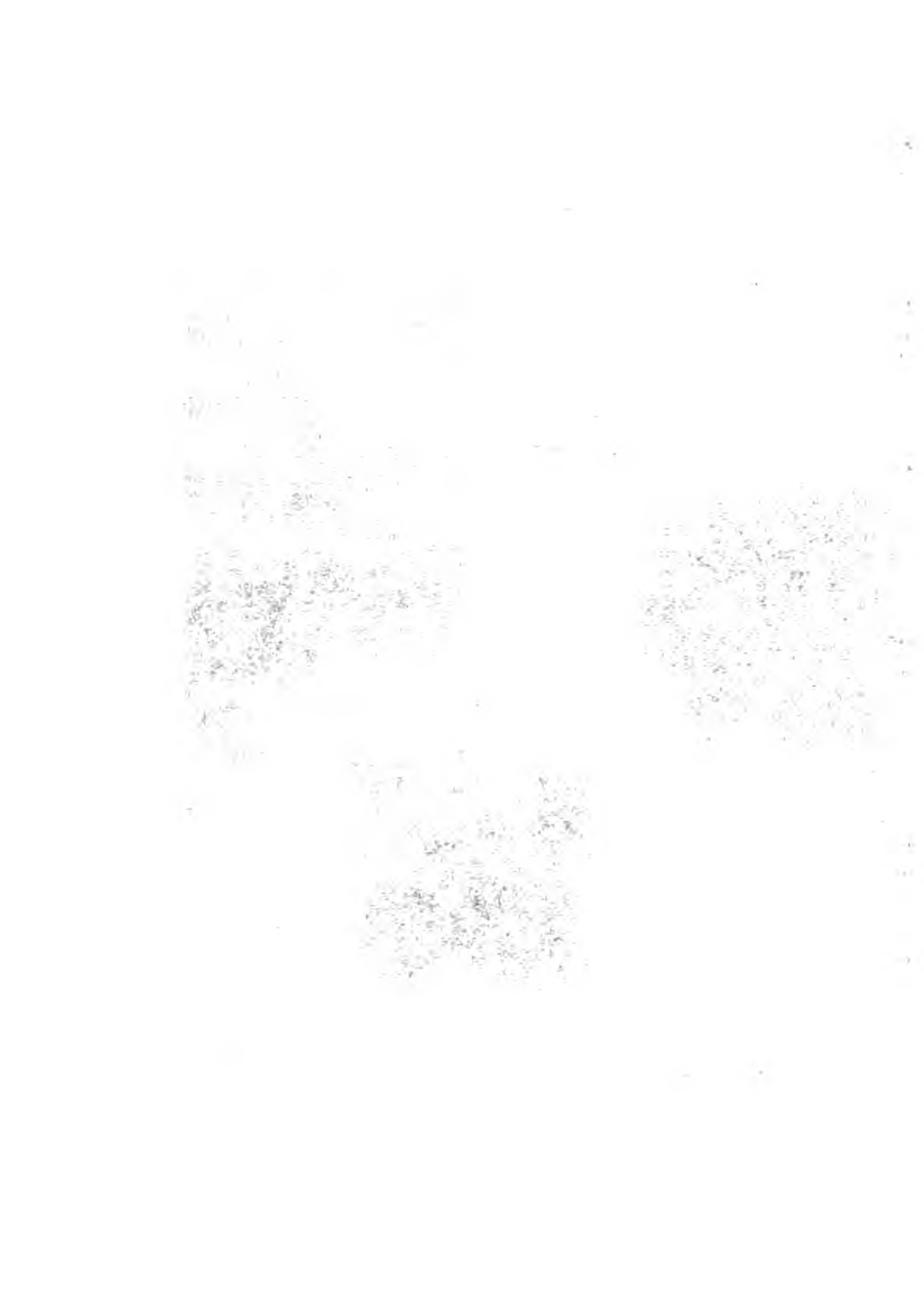
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AUNT ANNE'S
HISTORY OF ENGLAND
ON
CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES,
FOR THE USE OF
YOUNG PERSONS.

LONDON :
JAMES NISBET AND CO. BERNERS STREET.

MDCCCXLIX.



TO
THE CHILDREN
OF THE
REV. T. H. CAUSTON, M.A.

Incumbent of Highgate.

IN TOKEN OF SINCERE
ATTACHMENT TO THEM, AND OF EARNEST GRATITUDE
FOR SPIRITUAL BENEFIT
DERIVED FROM THIER FATHER'S MINISTRY,

This Little Volume

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED BY

THE AUTHOR.





P R E F A C E.

IN selecting books for young people, the great difficulty is to meet with such as carry religion into their daily studies and pursuits. Those written for their use, which assume an exclusively religious character, appear to be generally distasteful to them, until their hearts are opened to receive the Truth; while others bear altogether the impress of worldliness, or, at best, contain but a few dry moral reflections.

It is the object of the writer of the following pages to combine religious instruction with useful historical information, in a style as interesting as she could render it. She is aware how very far short of her design has been its execution, but ventures to hope for

indulgence on the plea of its being her first attempt of the kind.

The subject of the work precludes any originality of *fact*; but it has been her earnest endeavour, in giving some account of the leading events of English history, to do so in a manner calculated to instil into young minds the habit of reflecting on what they read, and of trying in all things to trace the hand of a Father ordering every event either in judgment or in mercy. And in the humble hope of being thus permitted to glorify Him, by “feeding the lambs of Christ’s flock,” she commends her little book to the indulgent consideration of the public, and especially of the juvenile part of it, to whom she wishes to be known as

Their affectionate friend,

“AUNT ANNE.”

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AUNT ANNE'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

CHAPTER I.

THE EARLY BRITONS—THE DRUIDS—THE ROMANS.

I AM afraid Aunt Anne will scarcely be believed, when she tells her little friends how different was the appearance of our beautiful and dear England, in the times she is about to describe, from what it now is. There were then no roads, no coaches, no steamers on the noble rivers, or magnificent ships keeping the mastery over the sea ; no railroads on which to whirl people from one end of the country to the other in a few hours ; no churches with their happy-sounding bells to call the young and old to worship under their solemn roofs ; no kind clergymen to preach of a merciful Redeemer, and to establish schools, where little people like themselves are taught to know and love him ; no entertaining books to instruct them ; and, worse than all, no blessed Bible

to be a "lamp unto their feet, and a light unto their path." Look at your neat and simple dress, and the comfortable furniture of your quiet nursery, or school-room; look at your indulgent nurse or governess; look even at your dear mother's gentle face, and think how ever ready she is to pour into your young hearts useful knowledge and heavenly truth; and how happily she listens to your pretty hymns and innocent prattle; while, dear grandmamma puts on her spectacles to examine some tasteful effort of needlework, offered by her darling little fair-haired grandchild. Not one of these now common blessings then existed.

It is true that there were mothers and grandmothers, and I suppose they too dearly loved their little treasures; but not as they now do—trusting that their children shall be "heirs of immortality through Christ;" and hymns there were none; for He, whose praises are sung in them, was unknown in England, which lay buried in the darkest heathenism. And books, and work, and spectacles, were things undreamt of.

I allude to the earliest time of which we have any authentic account of our beloved country, which, now awakened from her sleep of paganism, shines

brightly with the light of the Gospel, and sends out yearly many zealous men to communicate the rich blessing, the "good tidings," to other lands, still wrapped in the darkness of ignorance from which she has been so mercifully delivered.

Our history begins about half a century before the birth of our Saviour. At that time, England was a wild, uncultivated country, covered with thick forests, and abounding with unwholesome marshes. The rich soil was left unimproved, and the forests over-run with wolves—suffered to increase without any attempt on the part of the inhabitants to destroy them. The southern parts of the island alone, showed some signs of improvement, derived from a slight intercourse with foreign nations, which sent ships to trade with them. Very early indeed, tin was sought in Cornwall by the Romans, which the ignorant Britons exchanged for ornaments and trinkets of small value—as the Esquimaux and other savage nations now exchange their valuable merchandize for beads, looking-glasses, &c. There was a tin traffic carried on with the Cornish coast even by the Phœnicians, of whom you read in the Bible, the earliest merchants of whom we have any account; and it is supposed that the very name of

Britain is derived from the Phœnician word, "*Baratanac*," which means, "The Land of Tin.* "

The Britons lived in the winter in caves and holes dug in the earth. Their summer dwellings were made of a kind of rough basket-work, the only handicraft in which they excelled. There was quite a fashion for British baskets at one time in Rome; and one can easily imagine that such would naturally be the first invention of a people surrounded by forests, and with plenty of idle time on their hands. Their very boats, or *coracles*, as they were called, were made of basket-work, covered with hides to make them water-tight; and in these light and fragile vessels, they actually used to make voyages to Ireland, and even sometimes to France, then called *Gaul*. They wore but little clothing; and, as they had no manufactures, this was made of the skins of beasts. They had their bodies tattooed all over, like the New Zealanders and American Indians, and then rubbed with a blue dye, made from a plant called *woad*, which, making its way beneath the skin in the tattooed parts, could never be washed off. It must have had a frightful appearance to see men covered

* Geological Sketches, by Maria Hack.

all over with blue figures of animals, plants, &c., to say nothing of the pain the operation occasioned.

The little children were taught early to hunt, and to endure great hardships. It is true they had no French or Latin grammars, or hard sums to puzzle their brains ; but, I think you will agree with me, that the children of our days are better off. For arms they had bows and arrows, the first weapon of all nations ; shields made of wicker-work, covered with skins ; and clubs. Afterwards, when they had made some beginnings in the arts and manufactures, they had war-chariots, to the wheels of which were fixed weapons something like scythes, which inflicted dreadful wounds on their enemies when they drove in amongst them.

But now I come to the worst part of all ; their religion. Their priests, called Druids, exercised the most perfect mastery over the ignorant people. They worshipped the sun and moon, fire and water ; and offered up to them human sacrifices. These were chiefly prisoners taken in battle, who were enclosed in wicker images and burnt alive. You will shudder to think of such cruelty, my dear children, and your young hearts will swell with thankfulness that we live in happier times. It seems that all heathen

nations have offered sacrifices to their false gods ; and this is surely some shadowing of the truth, some indistinct idea, that men have sinned, and that the blood of a victim is necessary to appease an offended God ; as the Jewish sacrifices of bulls, goats, lambs, and doves, were a type or emblem of “the sacrifice of the death of Christ,” who freely shed his innocent blood as an atonement for our guilt ; “and having offered one sacrifice for sin, hath for ever sat down at the right hand of God.” (Heb. x. 12.) Since then, our blessed Lord has “loosed our bonds :” let our language be, “I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord.” (Ps. cxvi. 17.)

“ Believing, we rejoice
To see the curse remove ;
We bless the Lamb with cheerful voice,
And sing his bleeding love.”

Very different from the simple faith of the Gospel, was the gloomy superstition of the Druids. “To them all disputes were referred, by them all grievances redressed ; while he who dared to refuse submission, was subjected to the most tremendous punishment : he was cut off from all intercourse with his fellow-

creatures, and driven forth to perish like a beast of prey, unassisted, and alone." * Now don't you think we are much better off, with our good clergymen to preach to us of a merciful Saviour, visit the sick, and the afflicted, and teach the young ?

The Druids themselves lived in the deepest parts of the forests, under the shade of oaks, which they believed sacred. The mistletoe was peculiarly held in veneration by them ; and it is perhaps some lingering superstition derived from them, which makes people decorate their houses with it at Christmas. Their temples (if such they could be called,) were circles of enormous, roughly hewn stones, piled upon each other ; as at Stonehenge, on Salisbury Plain, where is to be seen the most perfect remnant of Druid architecture of this kind. Its ancient British name, *Cor Gawr*, means the Great Cathedral, and within these uncouth enclosures, were held the fearful mysteries of their dreadful religion ; while the agonizing screams of the imprisoned victims cried to heaven for vengeance on their inhuman murderers. Well might David say, " The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty." (Ps. lxxiv. 20.)

* Family History of England. By the Rev. R. Gleig.

I will spare you any further account of such awful idolatry, my dear children, and would not indeed have entered upon it at all, but that I wished to show you how great is the privilege we now enjoy, of dwelling beneath the purer dispensation of the Gospel. Now we will go on to the first step which God caused to be taken for the improvement of our country. I dare say you have heard of the warlike Romans, who, from being at first the inhabitants of a little mud-built town, became the conquerors of the greatest part of the then known world.

At the time of which I have been writing, namely, about fifty-five years before the birth of our Lord, the Roman armies were led by the most celebrated of all their generals, Julius Cæsar, who was then *prefect*, or governor, of Gaul, and afterwards emperor of Rome. He had led his soldiers from the south to the north of Gaul (or France), until he came to that part where it is nearest to England, which you will find on the map is where Calais now stands. From hence he saw the white cliffs of Old England, and doubtless wondered what sort of country it might be. Of the savage inhabitants he had already heard, and took it into his head to cross the sea, and pay them a warlike visit.

The Britons, hearing of his intention, assembled in crowds along the cliffs at Dover to oppose his landing; perceiving which, Cæsar steered a few miles farther to the north, the people continuing to run along, down to the very edge of the water, to receive their assailants. They were rather alarmed, however, when the Roman galleys came nearer the shore, and they saw the fierce looking warriors in their splendid armour; while the Romans, on the other hand, were somewhat dismayed by the strange, painted figures of the islanders, and their wild gestures and shouts. But at length, the standard-bearer of the tenth, or Cæsar's own legion, leaped into the water, reproaching his companions with cowardice; and they soon followed him, and a desperate conflict took place. The Britons were driven inland, and the Romans remained in possession of the shore. After staying in England about three weeks, they departed for Gaul, and did not return till the following year. They had then many engagements with the defenceless Britons, whom they always conquered, until at length they begged for peace, and consented to pay tribute to Rome, and Cæsar returned to Gaul, quite satisfied with his conquest. This tribute was not claimed by the Romans till the reign of Augustus Cæsar, about

twenty years after it had been imposed by Julius ; and even then the Britons were left in peace till nearly half a century after the birth of our Lord.

You know it is recorded, in the second chapter of St. Luke, that the Son of God came into the world in the reign of the Emperor Augustus. Judea was at that time a Roman province, governed by Herod the Great, who, seeking to slay the holy child Jesus, put to death all the little children of Bethlehem, who were "two years old, and under." At the time of the crucifixion, Tiberius was emperor of Rome ; in his reign Britain was left in peace ; but in the year 43, or about ten years after our Lord's death, Claudius, who was then emperor, sent an army to demand the unpaid tribute, and soon afterwards went thither in person. Many battles took place, in which the poor Britons were always defeated, but never discouraged ; for they met the Romans again and again, and never despaired of regaining their freedom. Even one of their queens, Boadicea by name, commanded an immense army against these foreign enemies, and when defeated, was so overwhelmed with grief, that she poisoned herself. She had never been taught that suicide is a great crime, so we must pity her, as we do all those who have been brought up in ignorance

of those holy precepts, which are so happily familiar to us.

Caractacus, king of another part of Britain, fought against the Romans for nine years, and sometimes successfully, but at length even he was conquered ; and, laden with chains, was carried to Rome, with his wife, children, and nearest relations, and exhibited as a spectacle to the people. It is said that, as he walked through the streets of Rome, and beheld the magnificence of the city, he expressed his wonder that the inhabitants of so grand a place could take the pains to molest the poor Britons in their mud-built huts. The empress was so struck with his dignified manners, and noble appearance, that she asked and obtained his life, and that of all his family, to be spared, otherwise they would all have been put to death.

These scenes of warfare continued during twenty-eight years ; at the end of which time, a Roman general, named Julius Agricola, was made governor of Britain, and acted very differently from any of his predecessors ; treating the poor people with mercy, and trying to soften, and improve them. He taught them to build houses, and to settle in towns, instead of hiding in caves and forests as before ; punished

any of his soldiers who ill-treated them, and caused the children to be instructed in the learning of his own country, only omitting that one most necessary part, which is the very "beginning of wisdom," namely, "the fear of the Lord." But of this he was himself ignorant, as well as of "the knowledge of salvation." It is thought, however, by some, that about this time St. Paul preached in the south of England, and that some few Britons thus acquired this most precious knowledge. The lady named Claudia, mentioned 2 Tim. iv. 21, is believed to have been a native of our country, and it is certain that Christianity was introduced into England at a very early period, although from the disturbed and warlike state of the country, it made, at that time, but little progress.

There were some bishops from Britain at the council of the church held at Arles, in France, A.D. 314, which shows that the religion of our Divine Master must have shone for a time, although it afterwards burnt low and dim through persecution and other causes. The Romans, unconsciously to themselves, paved the way for a purer faith, by abolishing the religion of the Druids, intending to substitute their own more polished, but equally false worship. Whether they generally accomplished this,

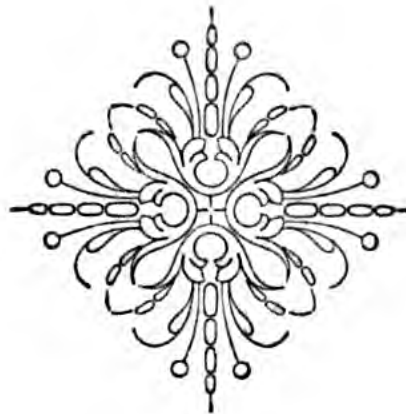
I am unable to say, but we are told, by William of Malmsbury, that the place where St. Paul's cathedral now stands, was formerly the site of the Temple of Diana, so that it is probable they succeeded in some degree, in grafting the superstitions of Rome on the relics of Druid paganism, which continued to darken the greater part of the country long after the time I am describing.

From this period we must no longer look upon the Britons as the savage people they were. Arts began to make some progress among them. Agriculture, or the cultivation of the land, and weaving, which produced a great improvement in their dress, became general. They learnt to work metals, and thus added much to the comfort of their houses, and their means of defence in war. Marriages were formed between the two nations, and thus the Romans, who were at first their enemies, became their friends, instructors, and benefactors. Agricola penetrated much further north than any former generals had done, and built a chain of fortresses from the Firth of Forth to that of Clyde (which you will find in the map of Scotland), to protect the Britons from their old enemies, the Picts and Scots, or Caledonians. The emperor Adrian, or Hadrian, A.D. 120, endeavoured still fur-

ther to protect them by building a wall eighty miles long, from the Solway Frith to the river Tyne, and, in A.D. 205, the emperor Severus built a stronger wall in nearly the same line, part of which remains to the present day.

Agricola, among other improvements, added to the geographical knowledge of his time, by sending his ships to sail all round England and Scotland, and thus proving them to be one island, which was not before known. There is little of interest after this to tell you about the Romans in Britain. The country continued to improve under their government, and to yield them immense treasures of money. The emperor Constantius came to reside in the country, but died soon after at York, A.D. 309. His son, Constantine the Great, was in Britain at the time of his death, and here assumed the title of emperor ; he was the first Christian emperor of Rome. At length the power of the mighty empire decayed ; and in course of time the Romans were obliged to withdraw their soldiers from Britain to defend their own country from the Gauls. As soon as they were gone, the Caledonians broke down the wall of Severus, and poured in upon the Britons in immense numbers ; so that, having been long accustomed to have their battles

fought for them, they were obliged to call in the Romans to their aid once more. Accordingly, for a short time they returned, and a legion, under Gallio, drove back the Scots, and repaired the broken wall. Then Gallio left them, telling them that in future they must fight their own battles, for that the Romans could never again give them assistance. Thus they entirely quitted Britain, having held possession of it 475 years from the first invasion by Julius Cæsar.





CHAPTER II.

BRITAIN UNDER THE SAXONS.

WHEN the Romans quitted Britain, the condition of the inhabitants was wretched in the extreme. From having been so long accustomed to look up to them as governors, leaders, and lawgivers, they seemed to be unable to do anything of themselves. They left off cultivating the land, and consequently were punished for their indolence by a famine, which carried off great numbers of them, and was succeeded by a still more fatal pestilence. They abandoned themselves to all sorts of wickedness, and fought with each other, instead of trying to defend themselves from their enemies. The land being unproductive through want of cultivation, the Picts and Scots left off coming to pillage it; and some of the Britons, awaking from their inaction, began to sow and plough, and the next year were repaid by an abundant harvest. This, however, they were not allowed to enjoy in peace, for the Picts and Scots, as soon as they heard of it, poured in like a torrent, and bore away every

thing they could lay hand upon. Once more the helpless Britons applied to the Romans for aid. They wrote to Ætius, governor of Gaul, a letter, which they called "The Groans of the Britons." "The barbarians," said they, "drive us into the sea ; the sea casts us back on the swords of the barbarians ; we can only choose between being drowned or butchered."

But the Romans could no longer help them, and, in utter despair, Vortigern, one of their kings, advised them, in 448, to invite the Saxons to assist them.

These Saxons were a nation of pirates, living in the northern part of Germany. They were very glad to receive such an invitation, and sent over an army commanded by two brothers, named Hengist and Horsa. They soon defeated the Scots, and then, seeing the beauty of the country they had come to defend, treacherously determined on making themselves masters of it. They were not long in entirely subduing the unhappy Britons, some of whom were driven to take refuge in Cornwall, and Cambria, that part of the island now called Wales ; while the rest fled into the northern part of Gaul, or France, which was thence called Bretagne, or Brittany, a name it bears to this day, and the inhabitants of which speak a language resembling the Welsh. Horsa was killed

in battle, and Hengist took possession of Kent, and made himself king of it. Numbers of Saxons continued to pour into the country, and were very soon masters of nearly the whole of it. Each chief took possession of what he had conquered, and thus the country became divided into seven parts, each governed by its own king; and these seven kingdoms were called the Heptarchy, from the Greek words, *hepta*, seven, and *arche*, kingdom. Now, try to remember the names of these divisions.

* The kingdom of Kent, contained Kent, and part of Sussex.

Sussex—Surrey, and part of Sussex.

Wessex—included the coast from Sussex to the Land's End.

East Saxony—or Essex.

East Anglia—Norfolk, Suffolk, and Cambridgeshire.

Mercia—The midland part of the island.

Northumbria—From Mercia to the borders of Scotland.

At the time the Romans left Britain, Christianity had made considerable progress in the country: there had been some churches built, and even some monas-

* Mrs. Markham's "History of England."

teries, or religious houses, with schools attached to them. Monachism, or the practice of living together in monasteries, was introduced into the British Isles by Pelagius, about the fifth century. But from the invasion of the Saxons Christianity began to disappear from the greater part of the country. They pulled down the churches, and drove away the priests, and everywhere the people adopted the idolatry of their conquerors. In Wales alone the true faith was preserved, but it is an accusation against their bishops, that they made no attempt to convert the Saxons. These latter worshipped the sun and moon, and many other false gods. The names of the days of the week, as they are still retained, were given by them in honour of their idols. They were, originally, Sun's-daeg, Moon's-daeg, Tuisco's-daeg, Wodin's-daeg, Thor's-daeg, Friga's-daeg, and Saeter's-daeg.

The language we now speak is principally derived from the Saxon, mingled with Norman, or French, and Latin, which was that of the Romans. The Welsh alone retain the ancient language of Britain.

Generally speaking, the Saxons, although pagans, were of purer morals than the Romans, who, through luxury and self-indulgence, had fallen into very great

depravity. But one vice—that of drunkenness—was very common with these new conquerors, and soon became equally so among the Britons. At first their drinking-cups were made of wood and hooped, or of horn. They had immense bowls in which the liquor was put which was drunk at their feasts ; these were called “Wass-heil” bowls, because the guests drank each other’s health, the words meaning, “*Wish health,*” and from them is derived the word *wassail*, which you have probably heard. As the people grew richer, their cups, or tankards, were made of gold or silver ; but the same habit of inordinate drinking continued, and as each health was proposed, the guests were compelled to drink a certain portion of the liquor, and could, therefore, scarcely avoid becoming intoxicated before the feast was over. This increased into so serious an evil, that at length a priest, named Dunstan, thought it necessary to interfere. According to a modern writer, he invented a way of ornamenting the drinking cups which were passed round the table with little nails, or pegs, one above another, of gold or silver, as the material of the cup might be ; that every guest, when called to drink his portion might know how much the law of the feast required of him, and might not be obliged to swallow a larger draught

against his will. Hence seems to have come the old English proverb, which speaks of a man as being a peg too high, or a peg too low, according to the state of his spirits. It is much to be lamented that drunkenness is still a prevailing vice, especially among the lower classes in this country. Oh! that those who are addicted to it would consider how strongly this vice is condemned in the Word of God, and how injurious it is not only to their own respectability in life, but to the peace and prosperity of all connected with them! This Dunstan, or *Saint Dunstan*, as he was called, lived a long while after the early Saxons of whom I am writing, and we must come back again to the Heptarchy.

Not very long after the founding of the seven kingdoms, the Saxon kings began to quarrel with each other, and, in A.D. 560, Ceaulin, king of the West Saxons, was at war with all the rest, who made Ethelbert, king of Kent, commander-in-chief over them; and after the defeat of Ceaulin, honoured him with the title of *Bretwalda*, or Lord of Britain, which title was after his death enjoyed by other leading Saxons. It gave him power to keep the rest of the princes in check, and thus prevented them from destroying each other. This king Ethelbert reigned

fifty-six years, and married Bertha, daughter of Charibert, king of the Franks (now called *French*). She was a Christian, and it was agreed on her marriage with Ethelbert, that she should be allowed to worship God according to the rites of her own religion, and bring with her a bishop, named Liudhard, as her guide and instructor. A church, called St. Martin's, was therefore rebuilt for her, a little beyond the city of Canterbury, which is still standing, and is one of the oldest of our English churches. St. Paul says, "the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the (believing) wife," and "what knowest thou, oh, wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband?" It is probable that Ethelbert was inclined favourably to the true faith from observing the piety, obedience, and virtue of his wife, Bertha, like the husband spoken of by St. Peter (ch. iii. 1, 2.) "Ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands ; that if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives, while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear."

The Saxons, like many other pagan people, were addicted to the barbarous custom of selling their fellow-creatures for slaves ; one of those great evils which a merciful God overruled at this time to a

good end, which good shall last so long as the world endures. Some young Saxons had been carried away to Rome to be sold as slaves, and Gregory, surnamed the Great, bishop of Rome,* passing through the slave-market, beheld these poor boys, and was greatly struck with their fair and beautiful countenances. He inquired whence they came, and whether they were Christians; and hearing that they came from Britain, and were pagans, he exclaimed, "Alas! that such bright faces should be under the dominion of the prince of darkness!" In answer to his next question, learning that their

* The bishops of Rome had not then claimed a temporal dominion. This proceeding of the Pope's, so different from the conduct of Him who declared that His kingdom was not of this world, did not begin till much later. "Even Pascal II., A.D. 1100, only claimed to be the head of the Church within the borders of Europe. And it is well known that the title of 'universal bishop' is one which Gregory did not assume himself, and called it blasphemy for any bishop to assume. We shall find later, that the excessive power claimed by the popes, was one of the principal causes which led to the Reformation, and separation of the Church of England from that of Rome."—This account of the mission of Augustine to England, is taken from Churton's "Early English Church."

countrymen were called *Angles*, "It is well," said Gregory, "*angels* they are in countenance, and ought to be co-heirs of angels in heaven." Thus he continued to sport with the names of the province they came from, and the king in whose territory they were born. A kind-hearted mood, which concealed under an innocent jest, a more serious feeling ; for, from that day, he determined to go on a mission to England. This was some years before his election to the see of Rome, but his character was so much esteemed by his countrymen, that they would not suffer him to quit them. But he did not forget his pious intention. As soon as he had it in his power he sent Augustine, a very holy man, at the head of forty missionaries, to make his way into Britain. They heard such strange accounts of the wild and savage nature of the inhabitants, that when they had come as far as France, they wished to go back again ; but Gregory wrote them some kind, encouraging letters, telling them, no doubt, that all who follow in the steps of their Lord must also bear the cross, as He did ; and at length they went forward boldly, and landed in the Isle of Thanet, in August, A.D. 596.

Ethelbert had received notice of their coming, and offered them no opposition : and how must the heart

of his Christian wife have rejoiced that the "glad tidings" of the Gospel were to be sent at length to the benighted land ! Ethelbert soon appointed a meeting with them in the open air ; seats were provided for them, and at the command of the king, they preached to him and his nobles the Word of Life. The king was pleased with what they said, but wished to take time for consideration, before embracing their religion. He promised them protection and kind treatment, and gave them leave to preach, and to convert all they could. He assigned them a dwelling in the city of Canterbury ; and it is said that, when they drew near for the first time to the city, going in procession, they chanted this prayer : " We pray Thee, O Lord, of Thy great mercy, let Thine anger, and Thy fury be turned away from this city, and from Thy holy house, though we have sinned against Thee. Praised be Thy Name, O Lord ! "

The zealous preaching, and holy lives of Augustine and his friends, were greatly blessed to the conversion of the people. Ethelbert himself was very soon baptized, and we are told that his conduct proved his conversion to be sincere. He heartily rejoiced when he saw numbers flocking to the church for baptism, but took care that no man should be compelled to

embrace Christianity against his will ; “ only showing more hearty love to those who believed,” says Bede, “ as if they were become his fellow citizens, not only in an earthly, but in a heavenly kingdom.” He provided at once a certain endowment for the church, and gave a piece of ground for a cathedral and bishop’s residence in Canterbury.

I must not longer dwell on this most interesting part of the history of our Saxon forefathers, as I have already somewhat transgressed on the limits of a chapter. The religion of our blessed Lord from this time took root in England, and has ever since, though sometimes under great persecution, been the national faith ; a blessing for which we ought frequently in our prayers to thank the good God to whom we owe it, since it was He who put it into the heart of Gregory to send Augustine to England, and who also inclined that of Ethelbert to receive favourably these preachers of the holy Gospel, to the gentle influence of which we owe all that distinguishes our beloved country from others less highly favoured.

After the death of Ethelbert,* the title of Bretwalda, or Lord of Britain, was conferred on Red-

* Churton’s Early English Church.

wald, king of the East Angles. Redwald had been baptized during a visit he paid Ethelbert ; but being of a wavering, undecided character, when he returned home, and found his queen averse to his new faith, he attempted to compromise matters by setting up a Christian altar in a heathen temple, and so permitting the pure rites of Christianity to be celebrated under the same roof with the idolatrous ceremonies of his countrymen. The safety of a guest who sought shelter in his family, was endangered by the same irresolution. Edwin, king of Northumbria, had been unjustly deprived of his dominions by Ethelfrid, his uncle, and sought refuge in Redwald's court. Ethelfrid several times sent messengers, desiring Redwald to give up Edwin, and threatening him with war if he refused. On the arrival of the last of these messengers, Edwin, who had just retired to his room for the night, was called out by a faithful friend, and urged to escape, since Redwald had promised either to give him up to his enemy, or put him to death with his own hands : his friend also promised to find him a place of safe concealment. But, weary of his persecuted life, Edwin refused to fly, and declared his intention of remaining where he was. The rest of the night he passed on a stone seat near the palace

door, musing on his unhappy life. Suddenly he saw a man approach him, whose dress and appearance differed from any he had ever seen. Somewhat alarmed, he sat looking on the figure, till a strange voice asked him why he sat there watching while others slept. "It matters not," said the unhappy prince; "let it be my choice to watch, and pass the night out of doors, rather than within." "Do not think," said the stranger, "that I know not why you watch, nor what evil you fear. But tell me what reward you would bestow on him who should set you free from this distress, and assure you that Redwald will neither himself do you any wrong, nor give you up to your foes?" Edwin said that for such a kindness he would give whatever good he had it in his power to bestow. "But what if you should find him to have truly promised not only this, but that, after the downfall of your foes, you shall excel in strength and rule all the kings that have been before you? Will you then be ready to follow his counsel, if he shall show you a better rule of life than you or your forefathers have known?" Edwin promised that in such a case, he would always follow his counsel. Upon this the stranger laid his hand upon the prince's head, and said, "When this token shall come to you

again, remember the words that have passed between us, and delay not to fulfil your promise." He then disappeared, and Edwin, who was a heathen, and full of the superstitions of the time, thought he had seen a spirit. It was in fact a Christian who had accompanied Redwald from Kent, and whose name we shall learn very soon. He had, no doubt, become acquainted with Redwald's change of purpose, and took this way of communicating it to Edwin, in the hope of making it of use hereafter in spreading the true faith in the north. Redwald had been induced to abandon his treacherous design against Edwin, by his queen, who represented to him how unworthy of the honour of a king it was to think of breaking his promise, and betraying a guest who sought his protection. In a short time he defeated and slew Ethelfrid, and restored Edwin to his kingdom of Northumbria.

Eight years afterwards, A.D. 625, Redwald dying, Edwin succeeded him in the title of Bretwalda. His reign had been very prosperous, and his dominions had greatly increased, extending from the Humber far into the lowlands of Scotland, and he had added to them the province of Cumberland, and the isles of Man, and Mona, now called Anglesea. He sought in marriage Ethelburga, daughter of Ethelbert of Kent,

but her brother Edbald refused to give her to a pagan, remembering St. Paul's injunction, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Cor. vi. 4.), till Edwin promised that she and her household should enjoy the free exercise of her religion ; that he would receive her bishop, or other ministers, and himself become a convert to her creed, if he found it to be more holy than his own. On this promise, Ethelburga became his wife, being accompanied by a good man named Paulinus, as her chaplain.

The following year an attempt was made to assassinate, or murder, Edwin. A messenger from Cwichelm, king of Wessex, arrived at his court as an ambassador, and watching an opportunity while the king was giving him audience, drew a dagger from his vest, and attempted to stab him, but Ella, a thane, or nobleman, who saw what was designed, threw himself before his royal master, and received the blow intended for him, and which was so violent, that the king was wounded through the body of his noble-hearted friend. The murderer was slain by some of the attendants. The same night, Ethelburga had a little daughter, and having been in great peril of dying during her illness, Edwin, hearing of her safety, returned thanks to his false gods. Paulinus

offered thanksgivings to the true God and Saviour, and ventured to tell the king that it was not to those idols, but to *Him* to whom his prayers were addressed, that this mercy was owing. Edwin heard him without displeasure, and promised that, if he obtained the victory over the wicked king who had attempted to take away his life, he would himself openly embrace the Christian religion ; and in proof of his sincerity, caused Paulinus to baptize his little daughter. Edwin returned victorious, but still hesitated : he passed many hours alone, and seemed much perplexed. At length Paulinus went to him one day as he sat alone, laid his right hand upon his head, and asked him if he remembered that token. The king startled, was ready to fall at his feet, remembering that he had thought he was a spirit ; but Paulinus, preventing him, reminded him of all the mercies that had been shown him ; how he had been delivered from his foes and made a powerful king ; “ remember now,” said he, “ the fulfilment of thy promise, that He who has raised thee to a short-lived worldly kingdom, may deliver thee from eternal woe, and give thee a part of his eternal kingdom in heaven.” After this, Edwin called his counsellors together, and the subject was fairly discussed among them, and at length they all

embraced the truth. Coifi, the chief priest of the Northumbrians, was the first to strike a decisive blow against paganism. He mounted a war-horse, spear in hand, girded with a sword, and rode to the temple of his idol; and, to the great astonishment of the people, hurled his spear at the temple walls, so that it fixed there. His followers then set fire to the building, and broke down the fences: and thus did Coifi publicly declare his abandonment of idolatry; and Christianity became established in Northumbria. It is true that the mere adoption of a purer faith does not prove that any of these men became Christians in *heart*; that is known only to Him who reads the heart; every soldier who enlists in the army of his sovereign may not love his king, and *willingly* obey him; but it is a great step gained when men are baptized into the Church of Christ, and call themselves by His holy name. Remember what St. John says: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols," and bear in mind also, dear children, that although we do not now bow down to gods of wood and stone, yet every thing is an idol which occupies our affections to the exclusion of our God and Father.

Edwin was baptized at York, A.D. 627, in a small wooden church; and that little building was the

humble commencement of what is now York Minster. He maintained perfect peace in his dominions until the invasion of Penda, king of Mercia, who defeated and slew this good sovereign. So watchful was Edwin over his people, and so strict in administering justice, that it was commonly said, a woman or a child with a purse of gold might travel in perfect safety from one end of his dominions to the other. Edwin was killed on the 12th of October, 633, in the forty-ninth year of his age, and the eighteenth of his reign.

There were many more Saxon kings, of whom I should like to tell you some anecdotes ; and especially of the good king Oswald, who reigned in Northumbria after Edwin's death. But this part of my history is becoming already too long, and I must pass them over without notice. You will be much pleased to read some account of them when you are older.

The kings of the Heptarchy quarrelled so much, and encroached so continually on each other's dominions, that at length it was agreed among them to live all under one king, while they were themselves henceforth called *earls*.

Egbert, king of Wessex, thus became the first sovereign of all England, in the year 827, and reigned

prosperously till 836. Towards the end of his reign the Danes began to invade England; and in the course of the next two—those of Ethelwolf, his son, and Ethelred, his grandson—nearly overran the whole kingdom. Ethelred was slain by them, and succeeded by his brother, Alfred the Great, in 871.

In the next chapter you will read the history of this good and wise king, and some account of the ferocious Danes, who worked so much mischief to our country.





CHAPTER III.

ALFRED, AND THE SEA-KINGS.

THE Danes were natives, not only of Denmark, but also of the coasts of Norway and Sweden. Like the Saxons when they first came to England, they were principally *pirates*, that is, men who lived by plunder on sea and on the coasts. They were pagans, and their religion was of the wildest character, and more ferocious in its rites, if possible, than that of the Druids, to which it bore some resemblance. It was the custom among these people, when any of their kings died, if he left more than one son, to choose one to succeed him, and to send the rest with some followers to sea in ships, to support themselves as they could by robbery and outrage of every description. These royal pirates were called sea-kings, a name dreaded by the inhabitants of England for nearly two centuries. Their standard was a raven, as that of the Romans had been an eagle ; and as the steps of these merciless invaders were everywhere marked by murder, fire, plunder, and famine, the Saxons in time felt quite

a superstitious dread of this raven : possibly this is why it came to be considered as a “bird of ill omen,” as it still is by ignorant persons of our own times. Even the wives of these terrible sea-kings seem to have been more like fierce demons, than the gentle, pious friends and companions the Almighty intended them to be ; for they reproached with cowardice, and treated with contempt, that husband or brother who returned to them, if he could not tell them, not only of warriors slain in battle, but of towns and hamlets pillaged and burnt, and old men, women, and children murdered in cold blood, and with the utmost cruelty : so fierce and relentless becomes the character of those who put themselves under the dominion of Satan, by the worship of false gods. How can they “bring forth the fruit of the Spirit,” which is “love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, faith, meekness, and temperance ?” (Gal. v. 22, 23.)

The sea-king, Ragnor Lodbrog, one of their greatest heroes, was shipwrecked on the coast of Northumberland, when that province was governed by two kings, Osbert and Ella. This latter monarch ungenerously caused him to be put to a death of lingering torture ; and as the pagans, unlike the believers of the Gospel, look upon revenge as a duty, it is easy

to believe his countrymen lost no time in punishing Ella for his cruelty. Aslauga, the widow of Ragnor, urged them to hasten to avenge their favourite leader, and very soon the Danish forces poured over the northern part of our island, carrying fire and sword wherever they went. Osbert was slain in battle, and Ella fell into the hands of the merciless sons of Ragnor, who put him to a death even more dreadful than he had inflicted on their father. I cannot tell you of all the battles fought between the Danes and Saxons, nor of half the mischief they did ; but I will relate to you one of their works of destruction, because it contains the history of a brave little boy ; and Aunt Anne remembers that when she was young, she always liked to read of children.

In the early ages of Christianity, when people were often persecuted, and even put to death for their religion, it became a custom for clergymen, and others who wished to live a Christian life, undisturbed by the wars and turmoil around them, to dwell together in one large building, with a church attached to it for holy worship. These buildings were called monasteries and abbeys, and the men who inhabited them were called monks. Those in which women lived were called nunneries, or convents, and the women

nuns. Afterwards, these societies, at first absolutely necessary for the protection of Christians, and as places of study and instruction, fell into great abuses ; and as you will read in another part of this little history, they were dispersed and abolished by our English king, Henry the eighth. But at the time of which I write, the whole island abounded with these monasteries ; and as it was a sort of fashion for kings and noblemen to bestow great wealth on them, the plundering Danes soon set about robbing them of their money, and of the rich gold and silver vessels used in the communion. Croyland Abbey, in Lincolnshire, which was built on an island formed by the marshes and waters of that fenny county, was among the earliest monasteries attacked by the Danes.

After a great battle in which they defeated the Saxons, a few blood-stained and tired soldiers who had escaped destruction, came to warn the inhabitants of the abbey of the approach of the savage conquerors. This timely warning saved a few lives and part of the treasure. The abbot, and such of the brethren as were too old to escape, together with some children committed to their care for education, aided the younger monks in secreting some of the most valuable of the property in wells, and the rest in a boat

destined to convey them to the shelter of the neighbouring woods and marshes. How must the young men have grieved to be obliged to leave their venerable brethren and the dear children! But it was unavoidable: the old men watched the boat till it could be seen no longer, and then returned to the abbey; and as was fit for men preparing to die, assembled in the chapel, and engaged in prayer.

Even the fierce Danes paused for a moment as they entered the chapel, and beheld these aged men in their clerical vestments, chanting the solemn litanies of the Christian. But the chief, Askitul, advancing towards the altar, felled the white-haired abbot to the ground, by a single blow of his sword, and very soon every living inhabitant of Croyland Abbey, with one exception, was numbered with the dead. This was a beautiful little boy of ten years old, named Turgar, who kept close to one of the old men, and when his aged friend was slain, begged that the Danes would take his life too. But one of the chiefs, named Sidroc, touched by the child's beauty and innocence, threw over him a Danish tunic, and desired him to keep close by his side. Turgar's life was thus saved, and when the Danes had plundered the abbey, and set fire to it, they left the place, driving before them

the cattle and herds from their pastures, and went towards the Abbey of Medeshamstede, now called Peterborough, where was the most extensive and valuable library in the country. This the barbarians burnt, together with the church and abbey.

Little Turgar was taken by Sidroc to this scene of destruction ; but in going from Medeshamstede to Huntingdon, some accident happened to one of the waggons, which engaged Sidroc's attention, and the courageous child, seeing a good opportunity, immediately escaped into a neighbouring wood, and travelling all night, arrived the next day at the still burning Abbey of Croyland.

Here he found the young monks, who had ventured from their hiding-places, and were now trying to extinguish the flames, and collecting the mangled bodies of their elder brethren for the purpose of burying them. They scarcely knew how to believe their eyes when little Turgar appeared among them, and described the dreadful scenes he had witnessed. He helped the monks in their labour of love, and scarcely had they completed their task, when a few of the scattered monks of Medeshamstede came to beg their assistance in rendering the same pious office to their own dead, because the survivors were too few in

number to do it alone. After this Turgar and the rest of the brethren remained in their ruined abbey, till by degrees they died off, and Turgar was left at last with but one companion.

I know nothing of his after-life, but we may hope that so great a deliverance by God's mercy in his childhood, induced him to devote the life thus providentially spared, to the service of his heavenly Master. Croyland Abbey was afterwards rebuilt by a Saxon king, named Edrid, who took particular interest in the children educated there, and used to be followed by a servant carrying fruits and cakes to reward those little boys who answered best the questions he put to them about their lessons ; and Aunt Anne is inclined to think that the little boys, if they were like those of our days, had no very great objection to this sort of reward.

At the time when these sea-kings were at the very height of their insolence and cruelty, and the poor Saxons knew not what to dread next, God raised up to them a king wiser and better than any they had ever known, to free them for a time from the inroads of these terrible Danes. Alfred the Great succeeded his brother Ethelred in 871. By the time he was twelve years old, he had been a great traveller ;

having been twice to Rome, and once to Paris, where he stayed some time with his father ; and as he was an observing, clever boy, he learnt much, no doubt, in foreign countries, which he afterwards turned to good account in his own.

But at this age he had not even learnt his letters, and did not show any great inclination for study, till one day, his step-mother, queen Judith, an accomplished and good lady, showed him and his brothers a book of Saxon poetry, with very beautiful pictures in it, and promised to give it to the first who should be able to read it. The other boys paid no particular attention to what she said, but Alfred immediately set about learning to read, and in a reasonable time was able to claim the promised reward. The next book he read was a selection from the Psalms, and some prayers for daily use ; it also contained some blank leaves in which he was accustomed to write any observations he made worth remembering ; and this book he always carried about with him all the rest of his life ; and undoubtedly found it full of comfort and strength to him when he became a wanderer in his own kingdom, and, like David, fled before his foes. In addition to this learning, Alfred became an excellent Latin scholar, and well acquainted with Greek.

He was also a good performer on the harp, the most common musical instrument of the time. In this, as in many other circumstances of the early part of his reign, we are reminded of David, "the sweet psalmist of Israel." At the age of twenty-two he ascended the throne ; and in the very first year of his reign had to fight in nine desperate battles against the Danes. At length, in the second year, they obtained possession of almost the whole of the country, and Alfred was obliged to seek shelter, disguised as a peasant, in a place called Ethelingay, or Athelney, in Somersetshire ; an island formed by the junction of two rivers, and partly covered with a wood, at that time abounding with goats and deer. In this retired spot Alfred remained several months in the hut of a poor cowherd, employing himself in aiding in the family occupations ; and devoting his leisure hours to devising means for the liberation of his unhappy country.

A tale is told of him while here, so generally known, that were I not writing for very young readers, I should pass it over without notice, but it may be new to them. The wife of the cowherd was, although a kind-hearted woman, rather cross occasionally. One day, when she had to leave home, she entrusted Alfred, of whose rank she was ignorant, with the care

of watching some cakes, which were toasting before the fire, desiring him to turn them as soon as they became brown. Alfred sat by the fire, trimming his bow and arrows, and in deep thought about his kingdom, quite forgot the cakes, till the good woman came home, and found them burnt to a cinder. Mrs. Cowherd was in a dreadful passion, and gave him a thorough scolding, telling him that he was a lazy fellow, who could eat cakes fast enough, but would not take the trouble of watching them ; and the story goes on to say, that “the king listened in silence, and baked the cakes carefully in future.” Here we see the fruit of his frequent reading the selection from the Psalms : perhaps that very morning he had read, “Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth ; keep Thou the door of my lips.” (Ps. cxli. 3.) And when you, dear children, are addressed with words of harshness and unkindness, bear in mind this, and the apostle Peter’s counsel. (1 Pet. iii. 8—10.)

The husband of this angry woman was a man of such great ability that, afterwards, when Alfred was again in prosperity, he sent for him, and had him properly instructed, so that he was enabled to enter the church ; and he died bishop of Winchester.

After remaining several months in the friendly

concealment of the cowherd's hut, Alfred's friends began to gather around him in considerable numbers, and fortified the island; making a rough kind of drawbridge over the narrowest part of the river, so that they could take advantage of whatever opportunities occurred of harassing the Danes. His wife and children had joined him too, and this must have been a great comfort to him. In one of these engagements with the Danes, their raven-standard was taken from them, and as they had held it in superstitious reverence, believing that they could not be conquered while it remained in their possession, the loss of it greatly dispirited them.

After this, Alfred's skill in music became very useful to him in a way he could not have foreseen when he took pains to learn it: and so it often happens with every kind of knowledge, however dull and dry it may seem to little people to be obliged to stay within and learn, instead of playing about in the fields or garden. Nothing really valuable can be learnt without labour. Aunt Anne knows that the art of music often gives much trouble to young persons; but when acquired, how valuable it is. How it elevates the mind and feelings, and how delightful for the members of a family to sing together

the praises of God, and thus to commence the occupation of heaven, where angels cease not day and night, with their voices and their harps, singing a new song before the throne.

It was necessary, before venturing upon any open attack of the Danes, to make out their numbers, position, and strength ; and there was much difficulty in such an undertaking. So Alfred generously determined to take the danger on himself, rather than expose any of his faithful followers. He disguised himself as a wandering minstrel, carrying his harp on his back, and so went into the very camp of the Danes, and even into the tent of Guthrum, their chief. They were delighted to hear him sing and play, and kept him several days among them. Alfred observed that they passed their time in idleness and luxury, keeping very little watch, being convinced that the Saxons were too thoroughly subdued ever to venture upon any further efforts for their freedom. When he had found out all he wanted to know, Alfred left the camp, and returned to his island-fort, happy that the time was come at length when he might hope for the deliverance of his country.

Stealthily then the various bands of Saxons gathered together from different quarters, and assembled

round their king, rejoicing once more to see his noble face, and to be led by him against their cruel invaders. Commending their cause to God, they charged against the Danes, and "the Lord was on their side:" very little blood was shed; the Danes were completely defeated, and at Alfred's mercy; and, indeed, he dealt mercifully with them. Instead of the frightful scenes of massacre, but too common in those times after a battle, he aimed at softening and civilizing these savage sea-kings and their wild followers. They came to him with fire, sword, and fearful curses, and he offered them a peaceful settlement under the Saxon government, and, above all, the blessings of the Gospel; and was not this nobly returning good for evil? Many of the Danes embraced Christianity, and under the wise dominion of Alfred they greatly improved.

After this it pleased God to bless this good king with a long peace, which he employed in making wise laws for the government and protection of his subjects, and in striving to glorify God himself, and to make His holy name to be honoured and revered by those who were committed to his care.

Upon the laws made by Alfred, and called the Saxon Code, are founded those which have since

rendered the English constitution, or form of government, the glory of our free and privileged country, and the admiration of the world. He greatly enlarged and improved the navy, in order, if necessary, to be able to meet the sea-kings on more equal terms ; and thus became the founder of that naval superiority which has made "the wooden walls of England" stronger and more enduring than walls of stone and gates of brass. He was also the founder of the University of Oxford, and invited the learned men of all countries to come and live in England that he might profit by their learning, and improve the manner of teaching in schools, public and private. Johannes Scotus, a very learned man, was his most valued and intimate friend. Grimbold, a French monk, also came over to England at his invitation. This man was a skilful architect. The church of St. Peter, at Oxford, was built by him, and it is supposed that he also built the cathedral of Christ Church, in that city. He was the original builder of Winchester Cathedral, part of which still shows some remains of Grimbold's architecture.

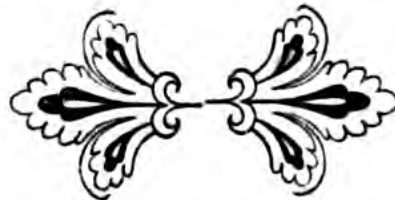
Alfred first divided England into *shires*, or counties, each governed by an earl or *shire-reeve*, (*reeve* meaning magistrate,) whence comes our word, *sheriff*.

“Alfred’s piety was deep and sincere. He divided the twenty-four hours of the day into three equal parts ; giving eight hours to sleep and refreshment, eight to the public duties of government, and eight to the service of religion. In this third portion we must reckon, not only the hours of prayer, and the Holy Communion, which he received daily, but also those that were employed in studies and in writings, all designed to set forth the glory of God.”*

As there were no clocks or watches at that period, he contrived a curious way of measuring time. He caused some wax-candles to be made of such a size as to burn exactly four hours ; and by marks set upon them he could at any time tell how far the hours were gone. These were put in a lantern to keep them secure from draughts of air, and hung in his chapel, where persons were appointed to watch them, and occasionally give him notice of the time. I might fill a large book were I to tell you all of the history of Alfred which has come down to us. But your little heads will do very well for the present if they remember all that I have here told you. He had, from his childhood, been subject to an internal disease, which at length caused his death, in the year

* Churton.

901, at the age of fifty-two. I will close this character of Alfred the Great with his parting advice to his son and successor, Edward the Elder, as he is commonly called. "My son, I feel that my hour is coming ; my days are almost done ; we must now part ; I must to another world, and thou shalt be left alone in all my wealth. I pray thee, because thou art my dear child, strive to be a father and a lord to thy people. Be thou the orphan's father and the widow's friend. Comfort thou the poor, and shelter the weak ; and with all thy might, right thou that which is wrong. And, son, govern thyself by law ; then shall the Lord love thee, and God above all things shall be thy reward. Call thou upon Him to advise thee in all thy need, and so shall he help thee."





CHAPTER IV.

FROM ALFRED TO THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

THERE were many Saxon kings after Alfred, but as there is not much to interest you in their reigns, I think my best plan will be to give you a list of their names, and tell you afterwards anything worth relating about them. We will begin with Egbert, who was, you will remember, the first king of England when the Heptarchy came to an end.

SAXON KINGS.

		Began to reign.
Egbert	A.D.	827
Ethelwolf, his son		836
Ethelred.. } sons of Ethelwolf {	.....	857
Alfred ... }	.....	871
Edward the Elder, son of Alfred		901
Athelstan } sons of Edward {	.....	925
Edmund . }	.....	941
Edred ... }	.....	948
Edwy ... } sons of Edmund {	.....	955
Edgar ... }	.....	959

	Began to reign.
Edward the Martyr ... } sons of {	..... 975
Ethelred the Unready.. } Edgar {	..... 979
Edmund Ironsides	1016

DANISH KINGS.

Canute the Great	1017
Harold Harefoot } sons of Canute {	... 1035
Hardicanute..... }	... 1039

SAXON KINGS RESTORED.

Edward the Confessor, son of Ethelred the Unready	1041
Harold, son of Earl Godwin, usurped the crown against the right of Edgar Atheling, son of Edmund Iron- sides	*1066

The first four reigns after Alfred were full of contests with the Danes, whom he had allowed to settle in England, and had in some measure succeeded in civilising; but nothing seemed able to subdue entirely their turbulent dispositions, and they always took advantage of any confusion that might arise, to revolt against the reigning king.

In the reign of Edred lived the celebrated St.

* This chronological table is transcribed from Mrs. Markham's "History of England."

Dunstan, whom I before mentioned, as the inventor of a peculiar kind of drinking-cup, for the purpose of checking the vice of drunkenness prevalent among the Saxons, at first abbot of Glastonbury, and afterwards archbishop of Canterbury. There are so many strange stories told of this priest, that it is very difficult to separate the true from the false. I shall, therefore, not enter into any particulars of his life, which will more interest you when you are older.

In the time of Edgar, the nephew of Edred, the wolves, which before had swarmed in the forests, were exterminated, that is, quite destroyed, by the following means. Before his time, the Welsh had been obliged to pay tribute to the kings of England, either in money or cattle. But Edgar commanded them to pay instead, 300 wolves' heads yearly. I believe there have been no wolves in England since.

In the reign of Ethelred, called the Unready, from his weak, irresolute character, the Danes, commanded by Sweyn, king of Denmark, gained many advantages over the Saxons, through the imprudence and bad management of their king. His son, Edmund Ironsides, so called from his determined bravery, did his best to repair the mischief; and after several hard battles with the persevering enemy, at length induced

them to promise to live peaceably if they could. It was agreed that the Danish king, Canute, who had succeeded Sweyn, should rule over Mercia and Northumberland, and Edmund retained possession of the rest of the kingdom ; but almost immediately after this arrangement, he was murdered by one of his own nobles, and Canute then became king of England. He was a wise and prudent man, and soon reconciled the Saxons to his government.

His first effort was to make peace between his English and Danish subjects ; in which he tolerably succeeded. He sent away the two children of Edmund Ironsides into Denmark, it is thought, with the intention of having them murdered, in order to be free from their rivalry, as they were the true heirs to the crown. But if he really was so wicked, he was disappointed, for the king of Denmark sent them to Solomon, king of Hungary, desiring him to take care of them. These two little boys were named Edwin and Edward. The eldest died young, but Edward grew up, and married the daughter of the king of Hungary. They had a son, named Edgar Atheling, of whom we shall hear more by-and-by.

Canute the Dane reigned so wisely and prudently, that, like Alfred, he obtained the surname of "the

Great." He kept up the Saxon laws, and was equally just to the Danes and Saxons. He rebuilt the churches and schools which had been destroyed in the wars, and encouraged learning and useful arts.

There is a story told of Canute which I will relate to you, as it shows he had too much good sense and humility to believe the flattery of his courtiers, who thought to please him by exaggerated praise. He was king of Norway and Denmark, as well as of England, and they tried to persuade him that he was lord and master of the sea as well as the land. At length, wearied of their folly, he determined on giving them a lesson. Walking with his nobles on the seashore one day, he observed that the tide was coming in, and desiring a chair to be brought, he seated himself just at the edge of the water, commanding it to retire, and not presume to wet his feet. The tide of course, came rolling in, and in pretended anger he rebuked it for its presumption. Then, turning to his courtiers he said, "The titles of Lord, and Master, belong to Him alone whom earth and seas alike obey. There is no being really great and powerful, but God." The courtiers were ashamed, and it is to be hoped they became wiser in future. You know that the Psalmist has said, "The Lord shall cut off all

flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things ;” and it must be peculiarly offensive to Him, who is a “jealous God,” to hear the titles which properly belong to Him alone, given to his weak and erring creatures. Canute reigned about twenty years, and left three sons : Sweyn, who became king of Norway ; Hardicanute, king of Denmark ; and Harold, surnamed Harefoot, from his swift running, who succeeded his father in England. He reigned four years, and was then succeeded by his brother, Hardicanute, who only reigned two years. Both were bad and violent men, and nothing worth relating occurred while they governed England.

After the death of Hardicanute, the English were very glad to have a Saxon king again, and called to the throne Edward, surnamed the Confessor, or saint, and to show their joy, instituted a festival called Hoke-tide, or Hocktide, from a coarse, romping kind of game called *hocking*, which was played on the occasion, and which was kept up for many years.

Edward, having been brought up in Normandy, was very fond of having the inhabitants of that country about him, which displeased his subjects, and especially earl Godwin, an ambitious nobleman, who could not rest satisfied without being allowed to

manage the king as he liked. He had married a daughter of Canute the Great, and had a son named Harold, as ambitious as himself, who had set his heart on succeeding to the crown. Edward, seeing this, sent for Edward the Exile, son of Edmund Ironsides, who had been educated in Hungary. He died very soon after his arrival in England, leaving an only son, named Edgar Atheling, who was the rightful heir when Edward died in 1066. But Harold found means to set aside Edgar Atheling, and ascended the throne himself. He governed well and prudently, and defeated an army of the Norwegians who invaded the north of England. Scarcely, however, had he done this, when he was attacked by a new enemy in William, duke of Normandy, who, under pretence that Edward the Confessor had bequeathed the kingdom to him, brought over an army of 60,000 men to support his claim.

Harold met him immediately with a large force, and a great battle was fought between them at Hastings, in Sussex, on the 14th of October, 1066. At first, the Saxons appeared to have the advantage ; but Harold was slain by an arrow, which pierced his brain, and his two brothers fell by his side. There were great numbers killed on both sides, and at length

the English were defeated, and fled in every direction. Some few of the nobles met to place Edgar Atheling, if possible, upon the throne, but William was too quick for them, and caused himself to be crowned at Westminster, on Christmas-day, 1066.

Thus ended the rule of the Saxons in England, after it had lasted six hundred years. On the whole, their government had been of great benefit to the country. They had established useful laws, and religion and learning had made considerable progress. But much superstition had mingled with religion during the last two or three centuries; and it is said that William found the country so easy of conquest, because at least a third part of the land was in possession of the monasteries, nunneries, and clergy.

I may here mention one or two circumstances omitted in their proper place. The ambitious earl Godwin was the owner of some estates on the coast of Kent, which have since been covered by the sea, and now form the Goodwin Sands, so dangerous to our shipping. He died suddenly one day at dinner with the king, Edward the Confessor. This king was the first who called his nobles, *barons*; before this they were called *thanes*. He was also the founder of Westminster Abbey, where the kings and queens

of England have ever since been crowned. I might have told you too, that Canute the Great was something of a poet ; and there is still preserved a part of a poem of his, composed when rowing past Ely Cathedral one day, and hearing the monks chant the service. His name is often spelt *Knute*.

Cheerful sang the monks of Ely,
As Knute the king was passing by ;
“ Row to the shore, knights,” said the king.
And let us hear these churchmen sing.

Strangely enough, these rough rhymes were afterwards sung in the churches as a hymn.* “ Sing ye praises with understanding,” could not have been a rule with the clergy of those days.

* Mrs. Markham.





CHAPTER V.

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR—FROM 1066 TO 1087.

ALTHOUGH William had conquered the English, they by no means desired to have him as their king, preferring one of their own race, and speaking the same language as themselves. They frequently rebelled against their conqueror, and tried to place Edgar Atheling, the Saxon heir, on the throne. This provoked William, who was a cruel and bad-tempered man, and he punished these poor people with the utmost harshness. In one instance, he laid waste the whole of the county of Northumberland, and caused the inhabitants to be turned out of their homes ; so that not less than a hundred thousand of these unhappy persons perished, either by the sword or by famine. At that time, it was commonly believed that by doing some good or charitable action, people might make amends for any wickedness they had committed : and I suppose William's conscience reproached him with his shocking cruelty ; for he strove to give it peace by building an abbey near Hastings, the place

where he had defeated Harold. It was called Battle Abbey, and is, I believe, partly remaining to this day. This was a very mistaken idea of his, as even little children now know that there is *nothing* which can cleanse the soul from sin, but the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God ; which all may obtain by “coming boldly to the throne of grace” through faith in His name. But at that time very few people had learned to read, and the Bible was in the hands of the priests alone, and many errors were taught and believed.

Edward the Confessor had brought to England a number of Norman churchmen ; and at that time this country abounded with what were called *alien priories*, that is, monasteries subject to foreign countries. Thus, some were governed by Norman priests, and only subject to the dukedom of Normandy ; while others belonged to the Pope. It is easy to see that this strange arrangement gave William very great advantages, for many of these priories being not only ruled by Norman priors, but filled with monks from the same country, were very ready to give him welcome, and acknowledge his authority. But it was extremely injurious to the Anglo-Saxon clergy, who were deprived of their livings in order to make way

for the Conqueror's followers. Now the Norman priests, although generally men of greater learning than the Saxons, had contracted more of the errors of Romanism, and were also more inclined to pay implicit obedience to the Pope. William, himself, although not very patient of any authority but his own, rather encouraged this submission, in order to obtain the sanction of pope Gregory the seventh to his usurped dominion, and thus the way was paved for the papal supremacy in England, which afterwards became such unbearable tyranny, occasioning constant struggles between the sovereigns and the popes, until the connexion was entirely broken by the Reformation. William deposed Stigand, the Saxon archbishop of Canterbury, and put in his place Lanfranc, a prelate of great learning and piety, who used his influence with the king to soften his dislike and injustice towards the poor oppressed Saxons. He appears to have been the only one of William's followers who befriended them.

The king made several new laws, and tried to change all the old customs of the country, and even to make the English speak French ; and though he did not generally succeed in this attempt, the French language was much spoken by the higher classes at that

time ; and thus many of our English words are derived from the French, as others were from the Romans, Danes, and Saxons, by whom the country had been over-run. In Wales alone is the ancient language of Britain still spoken, and a difficult language it is to learn, being chiefly made up of consonants, and quite different from that spoken by the English of our days.

One of William's laws was a very strange one. He caused a bell, called the *curfew* (from the two French words "*couvre feu*," meaning *cover fire*,) to be rung every evening at eight o'clock ; when all fires and candles were obliged to be put out. This law remained in force a very long time. How mournful it must have been, when friends were ill or dying, to be deprived of fire and candle by which to nurse them, and how thankful we ought to be that there is no such law in our days ! I suppose William was afraid his people would employ the night hours in plotting against him, and so contrived this law to prevent their meeting together after dark. It is better to do what is right, and then there is no reason for distrusting others.

He was excessively fond of hunting, the only amusement he ever indulged in : and in order to

have plenty of room for this purpose, he destroyed all the villages in Hampshire for thirty miles round, turning all the poor people out of their houses ; and made very severe laws to prevent any one but himself from hunting in this place, which he called the New Forest. No wonder he was disliked by his subjects : and yet he was considered *religious*, because he was exact in going to church, and in the observance of the other ceremonies of religion ; but people must have had strange ideas on the subject, to suppose he could be a man of true piety, when he was so cruel and selfish.

One of William's works has lasted to our days. It is Domesday-book, containing an account of all the landed property in the kingdom, with its value at that time. It is still preserved in the Tower of London, and contains much information useful to historians. The end of his reign was much embittered by the quarrels of his sons. Robert, the eldest, was of a passionate temper, and one day, when his brothers, William and Henry, in a boyish frolic, threw some water upon him, he actually drew his sword, and would have slain them, had not their father heard the scuffle and interposed. But the enmity thus begun, was not so easily appeased. At length, from quarrelling with his brothers, Robert proceeded to the still

more heinous sin of rebellion against his father. He knew that by the king's will he was to be made duke of Normandy after his father's death, but was unwilling to wait so long for it ; and insisted on being at once put in possession of the dukedom, and on being sternly refused, he took up arms to force the king to yield to him. On one occasion the father and son were actually engaged in combat with each other, unconsciously, for both were covered by their helmets and armour ; Robert killed the king's horse, and was on the point of slaying him also, when William's helmet providentially opening, he was recognised by his son. As soon as he saw with whom he had been fighting, Robert was struck with horror and remorse, and fell on his knees to implore the forgiveness of his justly offended father. But William at that time refused to pardon him, and, bitterly reproaching him, he mounted another horse, and rode away. After some time, his good and pious queen Matilda, who grieved much for these dissensions in her family, interceded for Robert, who was very unhappy, and succeeded in bringing about a reconciliation. Dear children, take warning by this sad story, to watch over your temper, for you little know to what it may lead you if indulged. Solomon says—"The begin-

ning of strife is as when one letteth out water." One harsh, unkind expression may leave a rankling wound in the heart of one we should deeply grieve to offend, which may never heal. And nothing can be more opposed to the whole tenor of the Gospel, or to the holy example of the "meek and lowly" Saviour, than the indulgence of such sinful passions. Read the two last verses of the fourth chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians, commit them to memory, and pray that they may sink deep into your hearts and influence your conduct.

The last act of William's reign was one of injustice and revenge. He was ill at Rouen, in Normandy, when he was told that the king of France had made a foolish jest about his indisposition; and on so slight a cause as this, on his recovery, he marched into the French dominions, laying waste every place he came to, and setting fire to a town called Mantes, where he received the just punishment of his cruelty; for his horse, treading on some hot ashes, plunged so violently as to injure the king, who died shortly after, in consequence of the accident, September 9th, 1087, in the sixty-third year of his age and the twenty-first of his reign. He was buried in the cathedral of Caen, which was founded by him.

It is said that, when his attendants were engaged in his funeral service, a man stepped forward and refused to allow them to go on, until he had been paid for the ground on which the cathedral stood ; and which he asserted had been unjustly taken from his father by William. His sons were compelled to admit the justice of the claim, and to pay the money. But how many acts of oppression had he committed for which *no* restitution was ever made, and the remembrance of which must have made his death-bed terrible !

William married Matilda, daughter of the Earl of Flanders, a woman of sweet and gentle character, and well educated for the time she lived in. We owe to her a very curious record of the Conquest. In order to preserve the memory of her husband's warlike deeds, she caused a piece of tapestry to be made at Bayeux, in France, representing, in a series of designs, the whole of his proceedings on this occasion. It is two hundred and twelve feet long, and woven in coloured worsted. It is still in preservation, and forms a good historic picture of the period, showing the dresses, armour, shipping, &c.

William built a great many castles, which he gave to his Norman barons, to keep in subjection the

Anglo-Saxons. Some of them are still remaining ; among them, that of Norwich, a fine relic of his reign, now used as the county gaol. Others, as those of Hereford and Winchester, have been destroyed ; the latter in the civil wars of Charles the first.

I should have told you what became of Edgar Atheling, the Saxon heir, whom William deprived of his inheritance. He fled into Scotland, where he was received and protected by Malcolm, king of that country, who married his sister Margaret, and made one or two vain attempts to recover the English crown for Edgar. It was at length settled that William should pay the prince a mark (13s. 4d.) a day, on condition of his giving up all further claim to the throne ; and both parties were faithful to their engagement.

William left three sons and three daughters. His eldest son, Robert, inherited the dukedom of Normandy ; William, the second, succeeded him in England, and to Henry he left his mother's fortune. One of his daughters became a nun, Constance married the duke of Brittany, and Adela became the wife of Stephen, count of Blois.



CHAPTER VI.

WILLIAM RUFUS—FROM 1087 TO 1100.

WILLIAM RUFUS succeeded his father, William the Conqueror. He was called *Rufus*, which is the Latin word for *red*, from the colour of his hair. It was very common at that time, and long after, to give people a nickname from their appearance, and this often became their surname, and their children were called by it after them. Little boys are still apt to do this at school, but it is often very teasing, and we should never do or say anything to hurt the feelings of others; and sometimes a nickname sticks to a boy for ever, as was the case with Rufus, the red-haired. His eldest brother, Robert, was not satisfied with the dukedom of Normandy, but thought he ought to have had the kingdom of England too. Thus, the quarrels between the two brothers, which had begun in their childhood, continued when they had grown up. Many of the nobles favoured Robert's pretensions, because they had estates in both countries, and thought there was risk of their losing some of them if Normandy

and England were governed by different rulers. But Robert was so dissipated and extravagant that he very soon put himself in the power of his more cautious and avaricious brother, from whom he was compelled to borrow money. Then he joined William in besieging their brother Henry, who, you will remember, inherited his mother's fortune, and with it had purchased the castle of Mount St. Michael. Henry made a spirited resistance, but was at length compelled to surrender from want of provisions. A story is told of the three brothers during this siege, which is a curious specimen of what is called chivalrous honour; a quality more esteemed at that time than true religion.* Henry's garrison being in want of water, he made known their situation to his eldest brother, alleging that it was unworthy of a soldier to conquer by such means. Robert immediately consented to allow the besieged to receive a supply, and sent his brother a cask of the best wine in the camp. This indulgence displeased William; but Robert replied, "Ought I to let our brother die of thirst? If we had lost him, how could we replace him?" It is to be regretted that these fraternal feelings did not

* From a "History of England," published by the Religious Tract Society.

proceed from Christian principle ; yet this act of a dissolute, careless character may well shame many a professed follower of Christ, who withholds relief from a distressed brother. Does it not seem strange that Robert should have felt the duty of thus aiding his brother, at the very time that he was trying by force of arms to wrest from him his lawful possessions ? So inconsistent is the conduct of those who leave wisdom's "paths of pleasantness," to walk according to the devices of their own hearts.

The disputes between Robert and William continued until Robert's attention was taken off by the beginning of the Crusades, or holy wars, which I will try to explain to you. At that time it was thought to be very pleasing to God if people went to visit holy places, and to pray there. They did not understand that God dwells in the hearts of His people, and can be served best in the place and station to which He has called them. Many good men, therefore, bound themselves to walk to Jerusalem, to worship there at the Sepulchre of our Lord, and to see those places where He had preached, wrought miracles, and suffered death upon the cross. As they had not the education which we now have, we must not blame them, but be thankful that we live in better times. A

man named Peter the Hermit had been making a pilgrimage (as these journeys were called) to Jerusalem, and was grieved to find the holy city in possession of the Turks and Saracens, who did not believe in Jesus, and were very cruel to the Christians who lived there ; so he went back to his own country, preaching on his way the duty of rescuing Jerusalem from the hands of the infidels or unbelievers ; telling his hearers, on the authority of the Pope, that those who should die in the undertaking would be sure to go to heaven, however bad their lives might have been. Roused by this false preaching, thousands upon thousands of people, of all ranks and of every European country, joined into one great army, and marched for the Holy Land, hoping to save their souls by doing what they believed so good a work. How could they think a merciful Lord would take pleasure in strife and bloodshed ? “Put up thy sword into its place,” said He, “for all they that take the sword shall perish by the sword.” (Matt. xxvi. 52.) These warriors wore a red cross embroidered on the right shoulder, and hence the holy wars were called *Crusades*, or *Croisades*, from the French word *croix*, a cross. The cross has always been the favourite emblem of a Christian, but unhappily the emblem was

abused in popish times, and we Protestants have therefore been perhaps over scrupulous in the use of it; we still, however, retain the sign in baptism, "in token that we shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under His banner, against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue Christ's faithful servants unto our lives' end." (Baptismal service.) For the same reason, as a sign of their faith, the Crusaders wore a red cross on their shoulder. Many thousands who left their homes to join these expeditions, never returned to their wives and children, but died in the land they went to rescue. Surely they would have been acting more like Christians had they stayed at home, and tried to teach their children to be good and holy; but in those days men were more clever with the sword than with the pen, and there were but few books to teach them the right way, and fewer persons still who could read them.

Robert, duke of Normandy, was so anxious to go to Jerusalem, that he thought no more of quarrelling about the throne of England, but borrowed some money of William, and left the dukedom under his care while he was gone.

William Rufus had all his father's bad qualities

without his firmness and generosity. He was very impious, and addicted to low company, drinking, and other vices. He was excessively fond of money, and unscrupulous about the means of obtaining it. He pretended at first to be kindly disposed towards his Saxon subjects, in order that they might place him securely on the throne, but no sooner had he made sure of this, than he forgot all his promises, and treated them with still greater harshness and cruelty than his father had done. In his reign were built Westminster Hall, and the Tower of London, of which latter I shall often have to speak in the course of this history. William was as passionately fond of field-sports as his father had been, and met his death in that very New Forest which had been made by the Conqueror at so great an expense of injustice and cruelty. He had gone out hunting there one day, accompanied by Sir Walter Tyrrel. William slightly wounded a stag with an arrow, and Sir Walter, fearing it would escape, hastily sent another after it, which glancing from the bough of a tree, struck the king, and pierced him to the heart. Tyrrel, terrified at the accident, fled to France, and joined the Crusades, and William's body was found by some peasants, who threw it across a horse and took it to Winchester, where it was

buried in the cathedral. No one was sorry for the death of Rufus, for he thought only of amusing himself, and never tried to do any good to his people. I have read in some history, that he was very fond of dressing in fine clothes, and I mention this, my dear children, as another proof of his weakness and folly, to which I hope you will never give way. Read what St. Peter says on the subject of outward adorning, in his first epistle, third chapter, and third and fourth verses.

William Rufus was killed in the year 1100, in the fortieth year of his age, and the thirteenth of his reign.





CHAPTER VII.

HENRY THE FIRST—FROM 1100 TO 1135.

AFTER the death of William Rufus, Robert was the next heir to the throne, but he was absent from England at the time, and Henry his brother at once took advantage of this circumstance to supplant him. He was hunting in another part of the New Forest when William met his death ; and immediately rode off to Winchester, where the king's money was kept. This he seized, and caused himself to be proclaimed king. Then, to strengthen his possession, and to please the people, who still remembered their Saxon rulers with affection, he married Matilda, daughter of Malcolm, king of Scotland, and niece of Edgar Atheling, who was now dead, and thus the land came again into possession of the right family.

He was suffered to reign in peace till Robert returned from the Holy Land, and laid claim to the kingdom, which Henry refused to give up to him ; and by the payment of a sum of money, induced Robert to relinquish his claim, and go to his own

dukedom of Normandy. Robert who, although passionate, was indolent and averse to trouble, consented, and it was further arranged between them, that if Henry died without children his brother should then succeed him. But Robert's indolence would not allow him to govern even his dukedom with vigour, and he was consequently soon involved in many troubles, and his subjects were obliged to ask Henry to come to their assistance. He readily led an army into Normandy, and soon not only gained possession of the dukedom, but also took his brother prisoner, and shut him up for the rest of his life in Cardiff Castle, in Wales, having first had the shocking cruelty to put out his eyes. Henry had now possession of Normandy as well as England; but do you think he could be happy after so injuring his poor brother? "The wicked man hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten; He hideth His face, He will never see it. Surely thou hast seen it, for Thou beholdest mischief and spite to requite it with Thy hand." (Ps. x. 11—14.) We shall find that his unnatural conduct was severely punished in the sequel.

During this reign there was a long dispute with the Pope about the right of appointing bishops. It had been the custom for a bishop when elected, to be

invested, or presented with a ring and crosier, and then to do homage to the king. But the Pope declared that this was a privilege no layman ought to possess. Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, sided with him, and the dispute lasted many years, till at length Henry was thoroughly wearied, and agreed to compromise the affair, by allowing the Pope to invest the bishops, while they were to do homage to the king for their temporal possessions. Here was another step gained by the popes towards their supreme authority over the English church. This Anselm, although a man of great talent, yet caused much mischief by his overbearing disposition. He declared it to be unlawful for the clergy to marry, and insisted that all who had wives should put them away ; a hard and cruel measure, in direct opposition to the preaching and practice of the apostles ; but this, with many other Romish errors, remained in force till the Reformation. Not content with interfering with the clergy, Anselm then began to regulate the ladies' dresses. He was an eloquent preacher, and one day preached so furiously against long hair and curls, that the ladies in terror cut off their hair in the very church ! Strange figures they must have looked when they went home. There was a fashion among the gentlemen at this time

to wear immensely long boots ; and Anselm next set about preaching against them, but in this he was not so successful. The gentlemen even lengthened their boots out of opposition, till at last they could not walk in them at all without fastening the toes with a chain to their knees. Henry and Anselm were well agreed in one point. Both were anxious to encourage learning in the country. The king was himself much more learned than was then usual with laymen, and on this account obtained the surname of *Beauclerc*, or fine scholar. All three of the Conqueror's sons had a name of this kind given them. William *Rufus*, Harry *Beauclerc*, and Robert *Courthose*, or short stockings, because of his short legs. Aunt Anne's readers would none of them object to such a nickname as Henry's. In this reign stained glass was first used for church windows, and church architecture was much improved. The Knights Templars were instituted at this time. They were an order of military monks, appointed to defend the holy sepulchre at Jerusalem, and all Christian strangers, from the attacks of the Saracens.

Henry had two children, a son named William, and a daughter Maude, or Matilda, married to Henry V., emperor of Germany, and both of whom he dearly

loved. He determined that prince William should be acknowledged as duke of Normandy, instead of his poor imprisoned brother Robert. He, therefore, took him over to France, in order that the nobles might swear allegiance to him. When this was accomplished, they passed some time in feasting, and amusing themselves ; and it appeared that king Henry had now everything that he desired. He was very rich, and all his affairs seemed to prosper ; but the very means he had taken to secure this prosperity became his punishment. Henry and his courtiers set sail for England in one ship, and prince William followed in another, called the "White Ship," commanded by a man named Fitz-Stephen. A near relative, the countess of Perche, and many of the young noblemen of Normandy, accompanied the prince, and a gay and gallant company they were ; and doubtless, many a bright vision of pleasure in their prince's court filled the young hearts around him, who little dreamed that they should never behold the land for which they sailed. But the sailors had been drinking, and while all seemed so fair, the ship, through some mismanagement, was run upon a rock, and so broken, that the passengers were glad to take to the boat for escape. Prince William was among the number, and might

have been saved, but that he heard the screams of the countess, who was left on the wreck, and insisted on going back to her aid. But no sooner did the boat approach, than so many leaped into it that it sank, and all on board perished. Fitz-Stephen, who was holding on by the mast, when he saw that prince William was drowned, let go his hold and perished with him. Only one man, a butcher of Rouen, escaped to carry the melancholy tidings to England. For three days no one found courage to tell the king of his loss, and when at length it could be kept from him no longer, he fainted away, and, it is said, never was seen to smile again. He was not a good Christian, and, therefore, he did not sorrow as Christians do, hoping to meet those dear to them in another world, where death cannot enter, and partings are no more.

The barque that held a prince went down,
The sweeping waves rolled on ;
And what was England's glorious crown
To him who wept a son ?
He lived—for life may long be borne
Ere sorrow break its chain,
Why comes not death to those who mourn ?—
He never smiled again !

There stood proud forms around his throne,
The stately and the brave,

But which could fill the place of one,
That one beneath the wave ?
Before him pass'd the young and fair,
In pleasure's thoughtless train ;
But waves dash'd o'er his son's bright hair,—
He never smiled again !

MRS. HEMANS.

It does not seem that this great affliction led Henry to repent of his wickedness, for he did not restore his brother's property, but left him to linger on in his gloomy prison still.

“Twice fourteen winters Cardiff's gloomy towers
Heard his poor eyeless, captive brother's moan.”

Henry's daughter Matilda, having been left a widow by the emperor, married Geoffrey Plantagenet, earl of Anjou, and had three children, the eldest of whom afterwards reigned in England as Henry the second. Being exceedingly fond of his daughter, Henry passed the latter part of his life in France, to be near her. He is said to have died from an illness brought on by eating too freely of lampreys, a kind of eel, which was his favourite dish ; a lesson to my little friends to be moderate in the indulgence of their appetite, for even in this we may sin. “Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do *all* to the glory of

God.” (1 Cor. x. 31.) Henry the first died at St. Denis, a little village in Normandy, December 1st, 1135, in the thirty-sixth year of his reign. “How instructive is the history of this king! Superior to his contemporaries in worldly wisdom and scholastic learning, anxious to extend his own power, and to perpetuate his family, even in this life he saw all that he most earnestly desired pass away from his grasp. In his case we see, ‘that wise men die, likewise the foolish and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others. Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling-places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names. Nevertheless, man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish. This their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings.’ (Ps. xlix. 10—13.) How many do we behold every day pursuing the same foolish and unholy course!”*

* “History of England,” published by the Religious Tract Society.





CHAPTER VIII.

STEPHEN—FROM 1135 TO 1154.

HENRY the first left the crown to his daughter Matilda, and made all his nobles take an oath to obey her as their queen. Among the rest was his favourite nephew, Stephen, earl of Blois ; but his oath was a false one. No sooner was Henry dead, than Stephen persuaded the barons to make him king, and he found this by no means difficult, for those rough, turbulent men disliked the idea of being governed by a woman, and Stephen's pleasant manners disposed most people to think favourably of him. Indeed, there is reason to believe that, had he come lawfully by the crown, he would have been a wise and good king ; but having acted so completely in defiance of every consideration of law and justice, in possessing himself of his cousin's inheritance, it was impossible for him to induce his subjects to live according to law ; and nothing could be more dreadful than the state of the country during his reign.

To keep the barons in good humour with him, he

suffered them to acquire far too much power. He permitted them to build castles on their estates, on the pretence that they were necessary for the protection of their poor neighbours ; but the protection they afforded was much like that we should expect from a wolf entrusted with the care of a flock of sheep. These barons and their attendant knights seized the cattle and sheep of their neighbours, and everything else they could lay their hands upon that was of any value ; and not content with this, they imprisoned travellers and others in the stronghold of their castles, and put them to tortures too dreadful to relate, in order to compel them to give up their money. When Stephen found they made so bad a use of his indulgence, he tried to keep them in better order ; but they made no scruple of taking up arms against him, and then, resistance was useless, because of these castles, or forts, in which they could shut themselves up with their followers, and set any force sent against them at defiance. It must have caused Stephen much grief to see his poor subjects so cruelly oppressed, but he could hardly expect these unruly barons to be true to him, when they knew how treacherous had been his conduct to Matilda : and as we find that even in this world the wicked seldom go unpunished, so this

usurper was never at peace the whole time he reigned, being constantly at war with Matilda and her son, or engaged in contests with the barons and clergy ; for, strange as it seems to us, even the bishops had castles, and defended them as obstinately as the barons.

Matilda, finding that much discontent was felt throughout the country with Stephen's government, thought it a good time to try to gain possession of the crown. She had an army commanded by her half-brother, the earl of Gloucester, and the land was desolated with civil war. Sometimes Matilda had the victory ; at others, Stephen. At length the king was beaten for a time, and imprisoned in Bristol Castle ; and Matilda reigned for a few months. She does not appear, however, to have acted prudently. She was haughty and ungracious to her friends, and insolent to her enemies ; so that people began to remember with regret Stephen's mild temper and conciliating manners. I have little else to tell you of Matilda. The only circumstance that occurs to me is, that in her short reign the first stone bridge in England was built ; before that they had been made of wood. This was at Stratford-le-bow, so-called, from the *bow*, or *arch*, of the bridge.

The people soon revolted in favour of Stephen again, and then Matilda was obliged once more to give way to him ; and endured many perils and hardships before she succeeded in escaping from the country. At one time, when she was shut up in a town besieged by the enemy's forces, her friends could think of no other plan of escape for her but causing her to be carried out of the gates in a coffin. This was, I think, at Devizes, in Wiltshire. Then she made her escape to Oxford, which Stephen so closely besieged, that they were reduced to absolute famine ; but Matilda's proud spirit would not allow her to surrender. Once more she was obliged to resort to stratagem for safety. It was in the middle of winter, and the ground covered with snow. Matilda and three of her knights dressed themselves completely in white, and so managed to get away unobserved by any of Stephen's soldiers.

Many more battles were fought, which I shall pass over, as I think, my dear children, it must be painful to you to read of such doings, the sad consequences of the fall of man : as it is truly remarked by our present good archbishop of Canterbury, "As the public history of mankind is little else than a narration of wars and fightings, so is his private history

too often stained with malice, anger, and revenge." Stephen's great motive for his wicked usurpation of his cousin's inheritance, was his desire that his beloved son Eustace should be king after him ; but God often disappoints the plans of sinners, and just when he thought he was going to have everything his own way, Eustace died. Do you remember what St. James says about making all our plans for this world ? (Jas. iv. 13, 14.) If Stephen had known his son would die, perhaps he would not have spilt so much English blood ; but it is very much wiser to do what is God's plain will, and leave the event to Him ; then we shall never have cause for real unhappiness. The people were quite worn out with wars and famine, and were very glad when, after the death of Eustace, it was settled that Stephen should retain the crown for his life, and that after him Matilda's son Henry should reign. Stephen died at Dover, October 25, 1154, in the nineteenth year of his reign. His wife was Matilda, daughter of the earl of Boulogne.





CHAPTER IX.

HENRY THE SECOND—FROM 1154 TO 1189.

HENRY the second, you will remember, was the son of Matilda and Geoffrey Plantagenet, earl of Anjou, hence he was called the first of the Plantagenets, as several kings after him bore the same name. By inheritance from his parents, and his marriage with Elinor, heiress of Guienne and Poitou, he was possessed of many provinces of France, which became a fruitful source of war between the two countries for some centuries.

The English rejoiced greatly at Henry's accession after so stormy a reign as that of Stephen had been ; and his first acts showed that he wished to rule wisely. Stephen had brought a great many foreign troops into the country, to fight his battles, and these men were constantly quarrelling with the English, and behaving very cruelly to them. Henry immediately paid them off, and sent them back to their own land. Then he caused many of the barons' castles to be destroyed, which Stephen had allowed them to build ; and as he set about these improvements in a wise and prudent

manner, the people submitted patiently to his wishes. I am sorry to tell you his next act was not so praiseworthy ; for though, on the whole, Henry was a wise king, and was right in what he wished to do, he suffered his temper to get the better of him, and fell into a great sin. The clergy had, at that time, acquired by far too much power, even more than the king himself, and too often made an ill-use of this power ; while they could not be punished as others were, because they submitted to no authority but that of the higher ministers of the church. The power of the Pope too, had become almost supreme, so that on one occasion when Henry and the king of France had to meet pope Alexander the third, they held his stirrup while he mounted, and then walked on each side of his horse, leading it by the bridle. Henry was determined to check this growing power of the church, and looked around for some one to aid him. He had a very clever man as chancellor, named Thomas à Becket, with whom he had long been on terms of intimate friendship. Indeed, very strange stories are told of their intimacy. For instance, one day the king and Becket were riding out together, when they met a beggar all rags and tatters. The king, pointing out the wretchedness of the beggar, desired the chancellor to give him his cloak, which

was a new one of scarlet cloth, trimmed with ermine. Becket, thinking the king was joking, refused to part with it. Henry immediately seized the cloak, and attempted to pull it off; Becket resisted, and a struggle took place between them, which ended in the king's securing the prize, and presenting it to the astonished beggar. Cannot you fancy his surprise at the scene he had witnessed, and the fine present he had received? * "Sometimes the king took his meals in the dining-hall of the chancellor for the sake of amusement, and to hear the stories told at his table, and in his house. While the chancellor was sitting at table the king would be admitted into the hall on horseback, sometimes with a dart in his hand, returning from the chase, or riding to cover; sometimes he merely drank a cup of wine, and having saluted the chancellor, retired; sometimes jumping over the table, he sat down and partook of the banquet. Never, in any christian age, were two men more familiar or friendly."

Henry thought Becket would be the very man to help him in his attempts to reduce the power of the clergy. He was already in the church, as it was then customary to confer the dignity of chancellor on a

* From Lord Campbell's "Lives of the Chancellors."

churchman, as being better educated than the generality of laymen at that period.

When, therefore, Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury died, Becket was appointed his successor. But no sooner did Thomas à Becket become an archbishop, than his whole character appeared to change. Before this he had been fond of dress, pleasure, and the most unbounded extravagance; now he became grave and austere. "He wore sackcloth next his skin which he never changed, so that it swarmed with vermin; he lived upon roots, and his drink was water rendered nauseous by having fennel steeped in it. By way of further penance and mortification, he frequently inflicted stripes on his bare back. Daily on his bended knees he washed the feet of thirteen beggars, refreshed them with ample food, and gave each of them four pieces of silver." * Thus vainly did the members of the Roman Catholic church endeavour to win God's favour by tormenting the body, instead of watching over the heart. "Bodily exercise," says St. Paul, "profiteth little, but godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." By *bodily*

* "Lives of the Chancellors."



Thomas à Becket doing Penance.

exercise, is meant precisely that self-inflicted penance, and mistaken kind of mortification of the body, practised by Becket, and many other Romanists both at that time and now.

So far from striving to diminish the power of the clergy, he did everything in his power to increase it, so that Henry found he could not manage them at all. At one time he drove Becket out of the country, but was obliged to call him back to appease the people, who were quite devoted to him from the large sums of money he was accustomed to give them. The Pope also took up his cause, and by this time the papal authority was so supreme in England, that the king durst not resist him. After this Becket became more troublesome than ever, so that one day, in a great passion, Henry exclaimed, that surely he could have no friends left, or they would help to rid him of this insolent priest. Oh, how careful ought we to be against saying things in a passion!

These hasty words of the king were heard by four knights, who, in order to please him, agreed among themselves to murder Becket, and actually did so while he was reading the evening service in Canterbury Cathedral. How sad to think men should be found wicked enough to shed the blood of a fellow-creature even in the

house of God ! But when men once sin against God, and break his commandments, they can never tell where they will stop ; for Satan leads them on from bad to worse, till they are entirely his servants, and forget the blessed Lord who so suffered to redeem them.

When Henry heard of the death of the archbishop, he was so shocked at the consequence of his angry words, that he shut himself up in his room, and did not come out, or eat and drink, for three whole days. Let us hope he was praying for forgiveness of his sin, and strength to avoid so falling again.

One event of great importance in this reign was, the conquest of Ireland. This island was then governed by several kings, who often quarrelled with each other. Dermot, king of Leinster, having a dispute with the kings of Connaught and Meath, sought the aid of Henry against them. Accordingly, Richard Strongbow, earl of Pembroke, went over with an army to his aid, and afterwards marrying Eva, daughter of Dermot, succeeded him as king of Leinster. Henry eventually went himself to Ireland, where all the princes submitted peaceably to him, and Ireland has ever since been governed by the kings of England.

In the latter part of his reign, Henry was made

very unhappy by his children. He had four sons, Henry, Richard, Geoffrey, and John. Henry, who was to succeed him as king of England, wanted to share the kingdom with his father in his life-time; and as this was not allowed, he persuaded his brothers to rebel against their father, and they were constantly in arms against him, till young Henry and Geoffrey died within a short time of each other. Then Richard continued to behave very ill to his father. All this made the king very unhappy, you may be sure, since nothing is so grievous to a parent as an undutiful and ungrateful child.

“For sharper than a serpent’s tooth it is
To have a thankless child.”

At length Henry was told that his youngest, and favourite son, John, had also been plotting against him. This seemed to weigh down the poor king’s heart more than any other affliction of his life. He fell ill of a fever occasioned by distress of mind, and shortly after died at the castle of Chinon, in France, in 1189, in the thirty-fifth year of his reign. Dear children, beware of the smallest act of disobedience to the parents whom God has given you, if you would not draw down upon yourselves His heavy displeasure. “Children,

obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord." (Col. iii. 20.)

Henry's third son, Geoffrey, who died before him, was married to Constantia, daughter of the duke of Bretagne, in France, and they had a son named Arthur, who was next heir to the crown of England after Henry's successor, Richard the first.





CHAPTER X.

RICHARD THE FIRST—FROM 1189 TO 1199.

WHEN Richard heard of his father's death, he was deeply grieved. His conscience told him that his undutiful conduct had hastened it, and although it was now too late to gladden the heart of his father by his repentance, he sent away from him all those bad men who had advised him to rebel.

Richard was called *Cœur de Lion*, or the Lion-hearted, from his great bravery. Indeed, he thought more of exercising his valour in battle, than of adding to the welfare of his kingdom by governing them wisely at home. He raised a great army and went away to join the Crusades with Philip, king of France. Richard so distinguished himself in these wars, that the other kings and nobles appointed him commander over them all. This made Philip so jealous that he went back again to France, leaving about ten thousand of his soldiers to help Richard. The Saracens were often beaten by the Christians, but much money had been spent, and many men killed, while the rest were so

worn out with fighting and sickness, that Richard was unable to obtain possession of Jerusalem after all, and was obliged to set out for his own country. But in passing through Austria, (which you will find in the map of Europe, between Germany and Italy,) he was taken prisoner by the duke of that country, who had quarrelled with him in the Holy Land, and now sought to be revenged on him. This was not right, for it is said, "Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath ; for it is written, Vengeance is mine ; I will repay, saith the Lord." Poor Richard was a long time in prison before his subjects knew what was become of him. At length, a French minstrel, or harp-player, named Blondel, who was wandering about to find the king, seems to have been wonderfully led, by the providence of God, to the place where he was confined ; and sitting down to rest one day near the dungeon, began to play a tune that Richard was very fond of. The king heard the tune, and answered it by singing, when Blondel recognised his royal friend's voice, and immediately set out to let the English know where he was. They were overjoyed at the good news, for he was a great favourite with his people, who admired his bold and generous spirit, and open temper ; and they readily

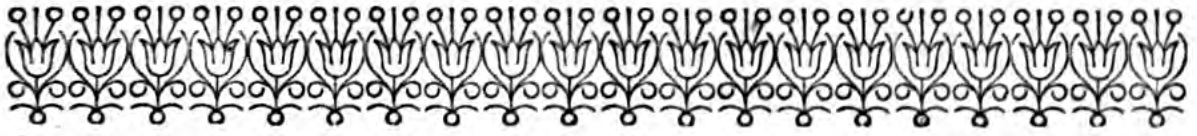
gave a large sum of money to the duke of Austria to set him free.

When Richard set foot once more on English ground, he was received with shouts of joy by his faithful people wherever he went ; for in those days men of courage and great deeds in battle were much more thought of, and praised, than those who strove to make men wiser and better in a more peaceable way. Richard's brother John had been plotting against him in his absence, and was now afraid he would punish him ; but Richard never bore malice, and forgave his unworthy brother directly.

It seems he had not yet had enough of fighting : for the last few years of his reign he was at war with the king of France, and was mortally wounded at the siege of Chaluz, by an arrow shot at him by a man named Bertram de Gourdon, who was immediately taken and brought before him. The king asked him what injury he had done him, that he should try to take away his life. The archer replied, that his father and brothers had been slain by his hand, and that he would willingly die to rid the world of one who had caused so much bloodshed. Richard was struck by this answer, and not only forgave Bertram himself, but desired that he might be left unpunished,

and set free after his death ; but this command was disobeyed, for Bertram was executed immediately after the king's death, which took place April 6, 1199, in the tenth year of his reign. Richard married Berengaria of Cyprus, but left no children.





CHAPTER XI.

JOHN—FROM 1199 TO 1216.

WHEN Richard died, the next heir to the throne was Arthur, the son of his brother Geoffrey, who was dead. He was a very nice little boy, twelve years old. But John, the most wicked man perhaps that ever reigned in England, was determined on wresting Arthur's kingdom from him, and not only seized upon the throne, but actually sent some horrid ruffians to put him to death. It is said that even these hard-hearted men were affected by the poor child's tears and gentle manners, so that they could not take his life : but one of them put out his eyes, and then the ill-used boy, trying in his terror to escape, fell from the top of the castle of Rouen, and was dashed to pieces. This is a very dreadful story, but we hope that this dear child now dwells in peace with Jesus, and the spirits of the just made perfect, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." This horrid crime caused John to be detested by every one.

His Norman barons would no longer defend the dukedom from the king of France for him, so that that country was lost to the kings of England for ever. Then he had a quarrel with the Pope about the appointment of an archbishop of Canterbury, in which the Pope, Innocent the third, had the advantage over him, and appointed Stephen Langton to this dignity. To Langton we owe the present division of the Bible into chapters and verses. Innocent then compelled the cowardly John to acknowledge that he held the crown of England from him as his superior, or master, when every one knows the Pope has no right to interfere with the English kings at all.

After this, the people were so enraged against John for his continued wickedness, cowardice, and injustice, that the barons, with Stephen Langton at their head, drew up a paper of laws for the better government of all classes of people in the country. This paper they called Magna Charta. They met at Runnimeade, a meadow between Staines and Windsor, and forced John to sign it, and to take an oath that he would observe it strictly. He did not, however, keep his promise, but secretly raised an army against the barons, and coming upon them when they least expected it, treated them very cruelly.

Thoroughly disgusted with his double-dealing, they now offered the crown to Louis, son of the king of France, who came with an army to their assistance. But many of the barons, thinking it after all wrong to desert their king, returned to John, who thus soon found himself at the head of a large force; but marching along a road too near the sea-side, from Lynn into Lincolnshire, the tide came in, and carried away almost every thing belonging to him. The anxiety he felt on this account brought on a fever. With great difficulty he reached Newark, where he died on the 19th of October, 1216, in the tenth year of his reign.

With the exception of Magna Charta, there was but little in this reign to interest you. The disturbed state of the country was unfavourable to improvement in arts and sciences. I find it, however, recorded, that the first stone bridge ever built over the Thames was completed in this reign, and called London Bridge. It was accidentally destroyed by fire a few years afterwards; when another was constructed in its place, which stood till very lately.

In the history of king John, we see how sad it is to be brought up without being taught to know and love Jesus Christ. He had not the advantage of

being early trained by a kind and good mother, as you, my dear children, have been ; and so, being left neglected from his childhood, he became a fearful sinner, whose memory is held in abhorrence by all good men. Pray, my dear children, pray early that you may be taught by the Holy Spirit the truth as it is in Jesus, that so you may be able to guard against your besetting sins, and resist the first attacks of the great enemy.





CHAPTER XII.

HENRY THE THIRD—FROM 1216 TO 1272.

HENRY, the son of John, succeeded him when he was only nine years old, and as it was impossible for such a little child to govern the kingdom properly, the earl of Pembroke was made *regent*, that is, he managed all the business of government until Henry was old enough to take it upon himself. The earl was a sensible man, and by his prudent management brought back the wild, unruly barons to their duty, and rescued the country from the king of France, into whose power it had fallen in the last reign.

Henry did not grow in wisdom as in stature as he advanced to manhood, and took the government into his own hands. He was, although good-natured, as it is called, yet so weak and fickle, that he was quite unable to keep his subjects in order. He put unprincipled people into offices which should only have been held by the wise and good. When he knelt at the throne of grace, he should have offered up Solomon's prayer for the aid of God; "I am but

a little child ; I know not how to go out, or come in ; and Thy servant is in the midst of Thy people which Thou hast chosen, a great people that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude ; give, therefore, thy servant an understanding heart to judge Thy people, that I may discern between good and bad ; for who is able to judge this Thy so great a people ?” (1 Kings iii. 8, 9.)

Henry married Eleanor, daughter of the earl of Provence. He greatly displeased his people by raising to the highest offices of the state Eleanor’s relations and friends, with many other foreigners, to the exclusion of the English nobility. The consequence of his folly and mismanagement was that, under Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester, there was a rebellion, and Henry and his son prince Edward were both taken prisoners. But Edward, who was a fine, spirited young man, soon contrived to escape, and raised an army to set his father free.

The people had begun to dislike Simon de Montfort on account of his proud, tyrannical disposition, so that only a few friends remained to him. A battle took place between him and the young prince at Evesham, in Worcestershire, in which the earl was killed, and the king wounded, and very near being killed also ;

De Montfort having for that very purpose placed him in the front ranks of his army, covered with armour, so that he could not be recognized. But when nearly overpowered, he exclaimed, "I am Henry of Winchester, your king," and the prince heard his father's voice, and removed him from his dangerous post.

To the earl of Leicester, although an ungodly and bad man, we are indebted for one great improvement. He first assembled a regular parliament, or great council of the nation : it was not exactly like what we have now, as many improvements have been made in it, which you will better understand as you grow older. The gentlemen of the parliament, counsel or advise the sovereign as to the best method of governing the country. Of course, they ought to seek wisdom from God in order to be able to give good counsel ; and, therefore, the two houses, before they begin business, always have prayers read to them, in the House of Lords by a bishop, and in the House of Commons by a chaplain appointed for the purpose ; and we are taught to pray for them in church every Sunday while parliament is assembled.

I have had to tell you of so many undutiful sons in the last few reigns, that I am very glad now to have to mention the good prince Edward, who after saving

his father's life in the battle of Evesham, helped him to bring his people into subjection again, and behaved very kindly to those who had been his enemies, so that many of them became his firm friends. In this, you know, dear children, he was obeying the precepts and example of his Saviour. When he saw his father once more firmly established on his throne, he joined the Crusades, and there distinguished himself greatly by his courage and good conduct. It was, as I have said before, quite a mistake to suppose that it pleased God, who is a God of peace and love, to see His people shedding each other's blood in His service ; but this was not the opinion of those warlike times, and we cannot blame Edward for doing what he had no means of knowing was wrong. His wife, Eleanor of Castile, accompanied him to Palestine, and was made the instrument of saving her husband's life. The Saracens, who found him too powerful to subdue in open fight, employed an assassin to murder him. The man contrived to stab the prince, who wrested the dagger from him, and slew the assassin ; but the weapon had been poisoned, and the wound would have been mortal, had not Eleanor risked her own life by sucking the poison from it. Edward remained in the Holy Land two years, and in that time the barons had

again become unruly, and troublesome to the old king Henry, so that at last, quite worn out, he died at Westminster in 1272, in the fifty-seventh year of his reign, the very longest of any English reign, except that of our good king George III.

In this reign the Jews were very ill-treated, and compelled, by the most dreadful tortures, to give up their wealth to their inhuman plunderers. Truly was fulfilled the awful prophecy against them, for their idolatry, rejection of the Messiah, and hardness of heart. God had threatened them by the mouth of His servant Moses, with terrible punishments in case of their falling into these sins. He said, "Thou shalt find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest, but the Lord shall give thee a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind; and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life." (Deut. xxviii. 65, 66.)

The inhabitants of the various countries into which these scattered Israelites had fled, thought, in those dark times, that they pleased God by adding to their sufferings. But this was a very great mistake, as they would have known, had the Bible been open to them as now it is to us. God loves those who love His

“ancient people” the Jews, and strive by Christian means to win them to “look upon Him whom they pierced,” and has threatened severe judgments upon those who by cruelty and persecution add to the sorrows of those who have so long been driven from their country by the chastening hand of their still loving Father, the God of Jacob.

In the reign of Henry the third lived Roger Bacon, a monk, at Oxford, who made so many discoveries, and was so learned a man, that the ignorant people of the time put him in prison, and kept him there many years, because they thought him a magician. He invented telescopes, magnifying-glasses, and many other mathematical and astronomical instruments. My young readers are indebted to Roger Bacon for an invention from which they have all probably derived amusement—I mean the “magic lantern.” He was also the inventor of gunpowder, although it did not then come into use. He died at Oxford in 1292. Cider, linen, and tapestry, were first made in England at this time, and the mariner’s compass is by some said to have been invented, but this is a disputed point.



CHAPTER XIII.

EDWARD THE FIRST—FROM 1272 to 1307.

EDWARD, the son of Henry the third, was on his way home from the Holy Land when his father died. I have told you he had fallen into the error of the times he lived in, by fancying warlike deeds the chief glory of a king ; and this error led him in many instances to act cruelly, although he was not naturally of a cruel disposition.

Wales was, till this reign, governed by its own kings, but as the Welsh were often very troublesome neighbours, Edward was resolved to conquer them, which, after much difficulty, he did, and very unjustly and cruelly caused David the king to be put to death. He was also guilty of a shocking act of cruelty towards the Welsh bards, or poets.* These men used to play fine old martial and patriotic airs on the harp of their country, and sang to them poetry of their own composition, about the strength, courage,

* From " England and its People."

and goodness of the old princes of Wales. By their spirited songs and beautiful music (for many of these old Welsh airs are exquisitely touching and wild), these wandering bards helped greatly to cherish in the minds of the people the love of their country and their kings, so that they remained an untameable and hostile race. Finding then that there was but little prospect of subduing them while these bards excited them to warlike deeds by their songs, Edward caused them to be all assembled together on some pretence, and then put to death in cold blood; a wicked deed, which must leave a lasting stain upon his name.

Edward built the castles of Conway and Caernarvon, which are in our days such magnificent ruins. But we are happy in now finding ourselves sufficiently protected by the just administration of the laws, so that we need no such strongholds to enable us to dwell in safety, but "every man's house is his castle," and the gentle hand of a woman suffices to rule a whole nation in peace and prosperity.

After subduing the country, Edward remained about a year in Wales, teaching the Welsh to cultivate their land, and other useful arts. To reconcile them still more to his dominion, he promised them a prince born in their own country, and who could not speak a word

of English. When his son Edward was born in Caernarvon Castle, he took him in his arms, and presented him to the people as their prince ; and although this was not exactly what they had expected from his promise, they accepted the little gentleman as their ruler, and from that time the eldest son of the English sovereign has always been called the prince of Wales.

The king next turned his attention to Scotland, at that time governed by its own kings. Alexander the third, king of Scotland, dying, and leaving no direct heir, three or four lords tried to gain possession of the crown, and asked Edward to settle which of them was to have it. John Baliol, one of the claimants, promised that if Edward would allow him to bear the *title* of king, he would give up all the real *power* to him. This Edward readily agreed to, but the Scotch were naturally very angry with Baliol for acting so deceitfully. Sir William Wallace, who loved his country too well to see it governed by any but its rightful sovereign, raised an army, and fought desperately with king Edward, in the hope of regaining its ancient freedom.

But Edward, after a great many battles, conquered Wallace, and took him prisoner, through the treachery

of one of his followers, who betrayed the hiding place of the noble-minded patriot. Then again Edward behaved with great cruelty, for he caused Wallace to be beheaded as a traitor, though it is very certain he had been guilty of no treason. These cruel acts show us how much war hardens the heart, since Edward, who had shown himself so good and kind a son to Henry the third, more than once stained his hands with innocent blood. Happy shall we be when the days come, of which Isaiah and Micah prophesied, when men "shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

After the death of Wallace, the Scotch made Robert Bruce their king, who continued the war with England for the independence of his country. Edward became quite angry at being so much opposed, and made a rash vow that he would never return to his own throne until he had conquered Scotland. This was a very wicked thing to say, and like Jephthah's rash vow, and the promise of Herod to the daughter of Herodias, brought its own punishment, for he was taken ill, and died at Carlisle in the year 1307. Even in dying he was unmerciful and revengeful, for he

made his son Edward promise never to give up the struggle till he had conquered the Scotch. To die with such fierce words upon his lips, was more like an ignorant heathen, than a Christian on the point of entering his Saviour's presence. He was like too many others who seem to promise well in their youth, but the good seed of the Gospel not having taken deep root in their hearts, though it springs up at first, is soon choked by the cares, riches, and pleasures of this life, and brings no fruit to perfection. We may be very thankful that we live in more enlightened times, and be sorry that Edward had not learned to practise the lessons of mercy taught in the Gospel. By his severity he completely defeated his own aim ; for the Scotch were so enraged at the cruelty with which they were treated, that they held the English in abhorrence, and resolutely opposed every attempt at subduing them, till, two centuries later, when one of their own kings becoming heir to the kingdom of England, the sovereignty of the two countries was ever after held by the same person.

Although so stern in war, Edward was a very affectionate husband as well as son. His queen Eleanor (the same who saved his life in the Holy Land, by sucking the poison from his wound), gene-

rally accompanied him in his war excursions. She died at Harby, in Lincolnshire, and Edward accompanied her body from thence to Westminster, where it was buried, and caused beautiful crosses to be erected wherever they rested on this melancholy journey. Some of these are still standing; one of them, near Northampton, called Queen's Cross, and another is at Waltham Cross, in Hertfordshire; there were ten altogether, and the last was built at what was then the *village* of Charing, now called Charing Cross, and one of the most bustling parts of London. Edward and Eleanor had fifteen children, the first nine of whom died. One of these, a son, dying about the same time as the old king Henry, Edward was observed to grieve much more for his father than for his child; and on being asked the reason of this, he replied, "God can give us many children, but we can have but one father."

Several useful laws were made in this reign for checking the power of the clergy and the nobles, and for the better regulation of property, but they are rather above the comprehension of my young readers at present. Edward reigned thirty-five years, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

He was succeeded by his eldest surviving son, Edward of Carnarvon, the first prince of Wales.

I have forgotten to mention in its proper place, that Edward the first brought from Scotland the large stone on which the Scottish kings always sat when they were crowned, and which was held in high honour among them. It was framed, and made into a magnificent coronation chair, which is used for that purpose to this day. Edward was surnamed Longshanks, from his remarkable length of limb.





CHAPTER XIV.

EDWARD THE SECOND—FROM 1307 TO 1327.

THE reign of Edward the second contains so much that must shock the feelings of my young readers, that I will pass it over very shortly, for I am sure they can find no pleasure in reading of actions so dishonouring to the name of Christian. Edward was thoroughly selfish; he only thought from morning till night how to please himself, and disregarded altogether the real good of his country. Avoiding the good and the wise, he gave himself up entirely to the society of worthless favourites, on whom he showered wealth and honours, to the exclusion of others far more worthy of his regard. The first of these companions was named Piers Gaveston, a man of so bad a character that Edward the first had banished him the country, and on his death-bed exacted a promise from his son never to recal him. But no sooner was his father dead than Edward brought back his friend, and utterly disregarded his other command to prosecute the

war in Scotland until the country should be wholly subdued. But Gaveston's conduct so incensed the whole nation against him, that a tumult was excited, and the favourite taken prisoner and beheaded.

The people then became so clamorous against the king, that, to please them, he was obliged to continue the Scottish war; but though his army was twice the size of the one opposed to him by Bruce, Edward was quite defeated at a place called Bannockburn, near Stirling; and the freedom of Scotland was thus secured. Truly, "there is no king saved by the multitude of an host." If "the Lord of Hosts be with them, kings need not be afraid of ten thousands of people that set themselves against them round about."

Edward married Isabella of Valois, and it was hoped he would then conduct himself with greater steadiness and prudence. But he was so far from taking warning by the past, that he soon placed himself under the influence of another favourite, Hugh Spenser, a Welshman, of insolent temper and rapacious disposition, whom he loaded with riches, and with the confiscated estates of the nobles who opposed him.

The queen Isabella, who was sister to the king

of France, being sent over to Paris to negotiate some business with him on her husband's behalf, refused to return home, and actually raised an army against Edward ; and unnatural as was this conduct, the king had become so thoroughly unpopular, that many nobles joined her when she landed in England in 1326. He was driven from place to place in the vain hope of finding shelter, and was soon made prisoner by Henry, earl of Lancaster, and taken to Kenilworth. Hugh Spenser and his father were taken and slain, and the queen and a worthless favourite of hers, named Mortimer, forced the king to abdicate the throne, and managed the government between them. He was committed to the care of three gentlemen, Lord Berkeley, John de Maltravers, and Sir Thomas Gournay, who were each to have charge of him a month by turns. Lord Berkeley treated the unhappy king with respect and kindness, but the other two strove to break his heart with their insults and cruelty. But this was too lingering to please the wicked queen and her guilty favourite ; they contrived a death too horrible to relate, but which would leave no outward mark to betray them, and Edward was thus barbarously murdered in Berkeley Castle ; but his agonizing screams

rang through the castle, and so revealed this horrid deed, which took place on the 21st of September, 1327, when he had reigned twenty years.

Bad as his conduct had been, one cannot but compassionate the awful end of Edward the second, while the name of his infamous queen Isabella will be read with abhorrence so long as history shall endure.

I can find little of interest to communicate to you, my dear children, respecting this unhappy reign. Amongst other calamities, a dreadful famine desolated the country for three years, and provisions became so enormously dear, that many of the nobles were compelled to dismiss their retainers, or followers, a set of men who had been accustomed to live idly and luxuriously in the castles of their lords, and who now, finding themselves deprived of the means of support, took to robbery to obtain a livelihood, and thus added to the miseries of a country already groaning beneath the hand of God.

Truly, it is not to be wondered at that the people were punished by famine for their extravagant wastefulness of provisions, among other sins, for it had become the custom among the higher classes, to load their tables in the most senseless and prodigal manner.

Edward the second issued a proclamation, forbidding them to have more than two courses at dinner.* The royal feasts were beyond any thing we ever hear of in our time. At the marriage-feast of the brother of Henry the third, there were thirty thousand dishes. It was the custom for kings to be attended at table by their physicians to tell them what to eat ; a very necessary precaution when banquets were furnished thus profusely, more befitting a swinish taste, than that of Christian men met together temperately to rejoice in God's good gifts.

* Mrs. Markham's "History of England."





CHAPTER XV.

EDWARD THE THIRD—FROM 1327 TO 1377.

I HAVE now a very long reign to tell my young friends about. In fact, the three longest reigns recorded in our history are of kings who were each the third of their respective names. Henry the third reigned fifty-seven years; Edward the third, fifty; and George the third, sixty. When Edward the second died, his son was only fifteen years old; but he soon showed that he had a strong mind: for, young as he was, when the Scots under Robert Bruce invaded England, he drove them away, and acted so vigorously that Bruce was very glad to enter into a treaty, and put an end to the war by marrying his son David to Edward's sister Jane. This is a very different thing from unjustly attacking another nation. It is as right to defend the country which God has given us from foreign invaders, as it is wrong unnecessarily to interfere with the liberties of others.

Edward's next step was of this latter class. He

chose to lay claim to the crown of France, in right of his mother, Isabella of Valois. But, by the Salic law, no female could inherit the crown ; and, consequently, Edward could have no just title to it through his mother. But he entered into a long war with that country, and gained some brilliant successes. The first naval engagement took place between the English and French in this reign, at Sluys, in which the English were victorious.

Edward the third married Philippa of Hainault, a queen of noble and irreproachable character. They had a son named Edward, who was called the Black Prince, from always wearing armour of that colour. This prince was of an exceedingly warlike spirit, and won some great battles in France ; in particular, those of Cressy and Poitiers. At the battle of Cressy the French had 120,000 men, while the English had but 30,000. The French lost many noble and great men : among others, the king of Bohemia was killed, and the Black Prince adopted his crest of three ostrich feathers, with the motto, "Ich dien,—I serve," which has ever since been the crest of the prince of Wales. Cannon were first used at Cressy. This battle and that of Poitiers, although most honourable to British valour, yet brought no real advantage

to the country. I shall, therefore, say no more of them, but proceed to the siege of Calais in 1347.

Edward had tried for eleven months to become the master of this strong city, but the inhabitants resisted so bravely, that his patience was quite worn out. At length, when the poor people were nearly starved, they promised to submit to Edward if he would spare their lives. He consented, on the cruel condition that six of the principal inhabitants of Calais should be given up to him with halters about their necks, to be instantly put to death. Cannot you imagine the horror and fear which such a command must have caused? No one would at first offer himself to be one of these unhappy victims; but at length Eustace de St. Pierre, a gentleman of the city, declared himself ready to die for the safety of his fellow-citizens, and five other gentlemen followed his example. Edward ordered them to be executed; but his good queen Philippa fell at his feet, and besought him to show mercy, with so many tears and prayers, that at length he pardoned them, and let them go free. Only think how delighted and thankful the families of these noble-minded men must have been to receive back again those whom they had already mourned as dead! Try to remember the name of Eustace de St. Pierre, for it

was a really brave and noble action to offer to die in order to save the lives of his fellow-citizens. Let it also remind you of *Him* who laid down His innocent life, not for His friends only, but for us sinners, his enemies, that we might escape the punishment due to our sins, and live with Him in glory.

During Edward's stay in France, David, king of Scotland, had taken advantage of his absence to invade England, but queen Philippa, who was as brave as she was kind, and although only a weak woman was yet strong in God's strength, was enabled to defeat the Scots at Nevill's Cross, near Durham, and David was taken prisoner, and kept eleven years in captivity. He was not the only captive king in England during this reign. At the battle of Poitiers, the Black Prince took prisoner John, the French king, whom he treated with great respect and kindness, justly ascribing the victory to God's will, and not to his own valour. He waited upon him at table, and when he brought him to London, took care that the king should be mounted on a splendid charger, while he himself rode beside him on a pony.

King John was allowed to live in Windsor castle, which was built in this reign. I am pleased to be able to tell you a little anecdote of this French king

very creditable to him. It was agreed that he should be restored to liberty on the payment of a very large sum of money ; and to seek this money, he was allowed to return to his own country, on his promise to come back to captivity if he did not succeed. He honourably fulfilled his word ; for not being able to raise the money, he returned to England, and remained a captive till his death in 1364. A character of this kind, who "swaureth to his own hurt, and changeth not," is mentioned in Scripture as one especially pleasing to God. Edward the Black Prince was so much beloved by the English, who hoped he would one day be their king, that the deepest grief was felt when he died about a year before his father, leaving a son named Richard.

A great many churches were built in this reign by good queen Philippa, who was also the founder of a college at Oxford, called after her Queen's College. Chaucer, the poet, who is called "the Father of English poetry," lived at this time. Much of his poetry is written in ridicule of the monks and friars, and serves to show how the minds of people were preparing to shake off the bondage of superstition, and to receive a purer light.

Wickliffe, the first English reformer, also orna-

mented the reign of Edward the third, and assisted the king in maintaining the falsehood of the Pope's claim to be considered as his superior ; a claim which, you know, had been basely admitted by John.

Edward the third encouraged commerce more than any of his predecessors had done. He invited some manufacturers from Flanders to come into England, and settled them at Norwich, where is still a church which was built for their use, and is called the Dutch church.

The year 1348 was made memorable by the most terrible plague ever known, which visited nearly the whole of Europe. Proceeding from China, this pestilence swept across Tartary, and thence made its way into the Levant, Egypt, Greece, Italy, Germany, France, and England.* In London it appeared in the autumn of 1348 ; and according to some historians, one half of the population, besides much cattle, was swept away. You know, dear children, that " the sword, the famine, and the pestilence," are visitations threatened by the Almighty to punish nations for their wickedness, and in the case of England at this period, we find that it was given up to the darkest

* Farr's " History of England."

superstition, and that wickedness and vice were frightfully prevalent. But “when the judgments of the Lord are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness,” and there is reason to hope that this terrible pestilence was made instrumental in producing a better state of things throughout the land. “The mind of Wickliffe* was roused to observe the awfully depraved state of the church, and that of the professedly Christian world at large. He was much troubled by the disgraceful proceedings of the monkish orders, who were promoted by the removal of so many of the regular clergy by death, and wrote one of his earliest tracts, entitled ‘The last age of the church,’ soon after this fearful visitation.” And thus, my dear children, does a merciful God overrule all things for the good of His creatures,

“ From seeming evil still educing good,
And better thence again, and better still,
In infinite progression.”

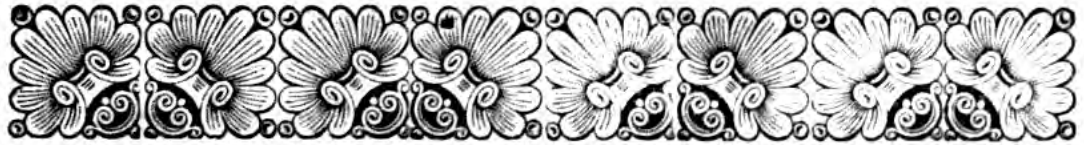
Among other changes and improvements of the reign of Edward the third, gold was first coined and clocks invented, the first turnpikes were made, and the first

* History of England, published by the Religious Tract Society.

speaker to the House of Commons chosen ; indeed, the parliament was then first divided into Lords and Commons. The title of esquire, now given so indiscriminately, was then first applied to people of fortune. The Order of the Garter was instituted, according to some historians, from the fact of the countess of Salisbury dropping her garter when dancing with the king, who picked it up, and presented it to her, saying, "Honi soit qui mal y pense ;" or, "Evil be to him who evil thinks." But others attribute it to Richard the first, who distinguished some of the brave knights-crusaders who attended him in the Holy Land, by giving them a leather garter to strap round the left leg.

Queen Philippa died in 1370, leaving a name held in the highest respect to our own days.

Edward the third died July 1, 1377, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and after a reign of fifty-years. His sons were Edward the Black Prince ; Lionel, duke of Clarence ; John of Gaunt ; Edmund, duke of York ; and Thomas of Woodstock, duke of Gloucester. His daughters were Isabel, Joan, Mary, and Margaret. He was succeeded by his grandson, Richard the second, son of the Black Prince.



CHAPTER XVI.

RICHARD THE SECOND—FROM 1377 TO 1399.

RICHARD the second was not more than eleven years old when he came to the throne. As he was too young to govern by himself, his three uncles, the dukes of York, Lancaster, and Gloucester, managed the affairs of the kingdom in his name. But their government was extremely unpopular. The dukes of Lancaster and Gloucester were ambitious, headstrong men ; and their continual demands for money caused much murmuring throughout the country. The conquests of Edward the third in France were a constant source of expense, from the necessity of keeping up garrisons in the towns to preserve them. To meet these demands a tax was levied, called the poll-tax, of three groats, or a shilling a head for every person, rich or poor, above the age of fifteen. The indignation excited by this tax ended in a serious insurrection of the lower orders, headed by a man named Wat Tyler. They were much excited by a crazy priest, named John Ball, who rode about preaching against

the higher classes, and maintaining that all men should be equal, repeating everywhere a jingling rhyme,

“ When Adam delved, and Eve span,
Where then was the gentleman ? ”

Wat Tyler was soon at the head of an immense multitude, who followed him to London, committing every species of outrage on the way. The young king was at this time about sixteen, and his uncles being absent from the kingdom, he determined, like a brave fellow, to go and meet the rebels himself. He asked them what were their grievances, and promised to give them a charter to redress them. Their leader, Wat Tyler, however, insolently laid his hand on the bridle of the king's horse, and kept playing with a dagger while he spoke, and Walworth, the lord mayor of London, dreading lest Richard should be injured, struck down the rebel with his mace, and he was immediately slain by the attendants. To commemorate this service, a dagger was added to the city arms, as we see it to this day.

The mob were stunned at seeing their leader fall, and some bent their bows to avenge him ; but the king (remembering, perhaps, that “ a soft answer turneth away wrath, ”) rode boldly up to them, “ What

mean ye, my lieges? Your leader was a traitor. Follow me, and I will be your leader." Struck by the confidence of their young king, the rebels actually followed him as far as Islington, where he promised to govern them well and faithfully, and the mob, with cheers and shouts, laid down their arms and dispersed.

Although Richard was at this time only sixteen, he was married to Anne of Bohemia, a princess whose exemplary conduct and sincere piety have won for her the noble title of "Good queen Anne." This marriage caused such general satisfaction, that people looked forward to a glorious reign under their youthful sovereign. But Richard did not grow up so wise and prudent as his early conduct led them to expect. He became idle and fond of pleasure, and so lost the respect of his subjects. How *can* a large kingdom be governed by idleness? It is necessary in all affairs to give our whole attention to what we do, or it will never be done well. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor knowledge, nor device, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." (Eccl. ix. 10.)

John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, one of the king's uncles, had married the daughter of Pedro, king of

Castile, and went to Spain with an army of 20,000 men on his death, to claim the crown of Castile, in right of his wife ; but after draining the country of money in support of his claim, he lost so many of his men by sickness, that he was very glad to compromise the matter at last, by marrying one of his daughters to the rival king of Castile, and the other to the king of Portugal, and then returned to England, and passed the remainder of his life in retirement. During the three years of his absence in Spain, his nephew, king Richard, had become extremely unpopular, giving himself up to pleasure, and to the society of people whose agreeable manners could not make amends for their vicious character. The duke of Gloucester contrived to get all the power into his own hands, and to reduce the king to a mere cypher ; but after bearing this tyranny for about a year and a half, Richard suddenly roused himself, shook off his uncle's yoke, and took the reins of government into his own hands.

He acted with so much vigour that the duke was compelled to submit, but was continually plotting against him. Surely a state of sovereignty is far from being one of peace and quiet at best ; but in those dark ages, when the nearest relationship did not prevent the great from plotting against their king, it

must have been a post of peculiar anxiety, and particularly to those who had not learned to look upon their earthly crown as in no wise to be compared with that "incorruptible crown," and that heavenly kingdom promised to those who are "stedfast, immovable, abounding in the work of the Lord."

Wearied at length with Gloucester's factious opposition to him, Richard caused him to be seized, and sent off to Calais, where he was murdered, there is too much reason to fear, by the king's order.

The following year a quarrel arose between Henry Bolingbroke, the only son of John of Gaunt, and the duke of Norfolk. Richard tried to reconcile them, but in vain; and it was agreed that the affair was to be settled by single combat; but when the antagonists met in the field, the king banished them both out of the country. While they were away, John of Gaunt died, and Richard very unjustly seized all his money and estates. When Bolingbroke heard this, he was so enraged that he came home without leave from banishment, and raised an army in the north to dethrone the king. He was assisted by the duke of Northumberland, and his son, called Harry Hotspur, because of his passionate temper. So many people joined them that Richard was unable to resist their

numbers, and gave himself up to them. He was imprisoned in Pontefract Castle, and there barbarously murdered; some historians say he was starved to death, others that he was slain, defending himself single-handed against four ruffians sent to despatch him. Is it not shocking to think of subjects murdering their kings, when we remember that it is God who gives them their authority? St. Paul says, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers; for there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." (Rom. xiii. 1, 2.)

Richard was deposed by Henry Bolingbroke in 1399, in the thirty-fifth year of his age, and the twenty-third of his reign. His first wife, Anne of Bohemia, having died, he married Isabella of France. He had no children, but the next heir to the throne was Edmund Mortimer, earl of March, the grandson of Lionel, duke of Clarence, who was John of Gaunt's elder brother; consequently Henry Bolingbroke had no just title to the crown, though he easily contrived to set aside the claims of Mortimer, who was only a child of seven years old, and ascended the

throne, of which he had forcibly possessed himself, as Henry the fourth.

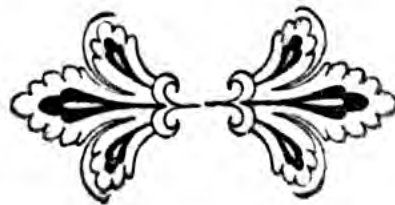
As I have nothing else of interest to relate to you about this period, I will describe the costume, or dress, of the reign of Richard the second, and of his predecessor, Edward the third. The gentlemen* wore long pointed shoes, fastened to the knees with gold or silver chains. As riding was very general, Aunt Anne is a little puzzled to think how they contrived to put their feet into the stirrups with such shoes. A stocking of one colour on one leg, and of another colour on the other ; a coat one half white, the other half black or blue, and a silk hood buttoned under the chin, embroidered with grotesque figures of animals, and sometimes ornamented with gold, silver, and precious stones. The dress of the ladies was equally preposterous, and unbecoming. They wore short tippets, and remarkably small caps, bound about their heads with cords ; their dresses had long trains which trailed in the dirt ; their girdles were ornamented with gold and silver, and they wore short swords, like daggers, which hung down before them ! A strange appendage to a lady's dress. It is to be hoped they

* "Farr's History of England."

never made use of such weapons. Thus dressed they rode about from place to place, on horses splendidly caparisoned, to see tournaments, and any other spectacle that attracted them. It is difficult to believe that English ladies and gentlemen really did go about in such a ridiculous costume as this, and pass their time so idly. How different the lives of many of the great and noble of our happier days, who “dwelling among their own people,” watch over the temporal and spiritual welfare of the poor on their estates; build schools for the education of their children, and alms-houses to shelter the aged and infirm; and strive to remember that they are but stewards of the wealth God has bestowed on them, and of which they must one day give an account. But the times of which I have been writing have been justly called the dark ages of England; it was indeed that dark hour before the dawn of the bright day of the Reformation,—the first rays of which now began to shine from the powerful writings of Wickliffe, who died in the reign of Richard the second, but of whom I shall have more to say in that of his successor, Henry the fourth.

The office of champion of England was first instituted in the reign of Richard the second. His office

is to ride up Westminster Hall on a white horse on the coronation day, proclaiming the king by all his titles. He then throws down an iron glove, or gauntlet, challenging any one to take it up and fight him, who does not believe the monarch then present to be lawful heir to the crown. Many improvements were made in furniture, and in building houses at this time. Side-saddles and spectacles became common, and clocks that struck the hour were introduced. And one invention was made, which, although at first only a toy to amuse the poor imbecile king, Charles the sixth of France, has since been so abused to the ruin of soul and fortune to thousands, that Aunt Anne heartily wishes it never had been made at all,—she means, playing cards.





CHAPTER XVII.

HENRY THE FOURTH—FROM 1399 TO 1413.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE soon made the discovery that peace is not to be enjoyed with power unjustly obtained.

“Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown,” under any circumstances ; but doubly uneasy must it be when a reproving conscience lines the golden circlet with thorns. Although no opposition was made to his claim, and the tender years of the little Mortimer might have softened the usurper’s heart, he kept the poor boy a perpetual prisoner at Windsor. His temper was so haughty, jealous, and suspicious, that he very soon turned against him even those who had helped to place him on the throne, and innumerable plots were made to deprive him of it, or of his life. One might have said to him, as Jezebel did to Jehu, “Had Zimri peace who slew his master ?” His whole reign was disturbed by rebellions, and his conscience must have told him he was undeserving of peace.

One of his most formidable foes was Owen Glendower, a Welsh chieftain of great courage, who called himself prince of Wales, and kept up a constant warfare among his native mountains. Afterwards a Scottish army, headed by earl Douglas, invaded Northumberland, and a battle was fought at Homildon Hill, in which Douglas was defeated and taken prisoner by the earl of Northumberland and Harry Hotspur. The king forbade them to ransom their prisoner, which so enraged them, that they set Douglas free on condition of his joining them in a conspiracy against Henry; they also enlisted Owen Glendower in their cause, and marched with a formidable army towards the borders of Wales, headed by Harry Hotspur. But the king, and the prince of Wales, met them at Shrewsbury, and after an obstinate struggle of several hours, the rebels were defeated. Douglas was once more taken prisoner, and Hotspur slain. Northumberland, although pardoned on this occasion, made two more attempts to dethrone Henry, but unsuccessfully, and he was at length slain at the battle of Bramham Moor, in Yorkshire.

The king was now delivered from all his enemies, for he had been so uniformly successful against them, that no one dared to resist any further. Even Owen

Glendower was deserted by his followers ; and driven from his mountain fastnesses, was obliged to wander about in disguise till his death in 1415.

In 1405, the young prince James of Scotland fell into Henry's power. He was the son of Robert the third, king of Scotland, an amiable but feeble character, who had not the strength or courage to resist the bold ambitious designs of his unprincipled brother, the duke of Albany. He had had two sons, but Albany had imprisoned and cruelly starved to death the elder. In the hope, therefore, of saving the life of the other, the bereaved father committed him to the care of the earl of Orkney, that he might take him to France for his education. But the vessel in which they set sail was taken by an English privateer, and Henry ungenerously kept the young prince a captive in England, and the poor infirm old king Robert died broken-hearted three days after hearing the sad news. Prince James remained a prisoner till he was twenty-eight ; but as some amends for his injustice, Henry gave him the very best education that could then be afforded, and the youth profited so well by it, that when restored to his native country, as king James the first, he proved to be one of the wisest and best sovereigns that ever sat upon the Scottish

throne. Thus does a merciful God and Father overrule the trials and sorrows of His children to their real good,

“ E’en crosses from His sovereign hand
Are blessings in disguise.”

This prince James, while improving himself in the more solid acquirements necessary for one who was to rule over a great people, indulged himself by way of recreation in the cultivation of a talent for poetry. Some of his ballads are still popular in Scotland, and one of his poems, called “The King’s Quair,” is said to be very beautiful. How much more rational this cheerful conformity with God’s will, than if this young man had passed his long captivity in murmurings and discontent.

“ Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage ;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for a hermitage.”

We must now return to our English king, whose mind was by no means in so tranquil a state as that of his young prisoner. In his reign the dreadful practice of burning people on account of their religious opinions commenced. It is thought that

Henry enacted this cruel law to enlist the clergy in support of his weak title to the crown. And they were not slow to avail themselves of it. Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, was especially severe against the followers of Wickliffe, who were called Lollards, from a Dutch word, signifying to *chant* or *sing*, from their custom of singing psalms or hymns. Wickliffe was born in Yorkshire in 1324, and educated at the university of Oxford. He afterwards became master of Baliol College, and rector of Lutterworth in Leicestershire. His attention was early attracted to the corruptions into which the church had fallen, and he preached and wrote against some of the principal abuses, which afterwards became the cause of the Reformation, especially the indulgences or pardons granted by the popes, for you know that the English were at that time Roman catholics, or *papists*; so-called because they acknowledged the Pope to be head of the church. These pardons for sin, called indulgences, were a fruitful source of gain to the clergy; for once people really believed that the power of forgiving sin was held by the Pope; we may be sure they would be glad enough to pay any money for such a privilege. It is scarcely necessary for me to point out to a child who is

possessed of a Bible the blasphemous falsehood of such a pretension on the part of the popes. "Who can forgive sins but God only?" And so far is he from requiring *money* for the purchase of salvation, that He cries by the mouth of His prophet Isaiah, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, *and he that hath no money*, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk, *without money and without price.*"

You know that by "wine and milk" are meant the privileges of the Gospel, which are to be procured, not by money, but by a broken and contrite heart, mourning its many sins, and finding pardon and peace by faith in a crucified Saviour. Another error against which Wickliffe preached, was the doctrine of transubstantiation, or the belief that the bread and wine used in the administration of the Lord's Supper, became, in the priests' hands, the actual body and blood of Christ, instead of being simply taken as a remembrance of Him, according to his gracious command, "Do this in remembrance of Me;" and to the strengthening and refreshing of the souls of those who partake of it in true faith.

The reformer also denounced in strong terms those who withheld the Scriptures from the people; and not

only preached against the practice, but actually translated many portions of the Word of God into English. When once the Scriptures began to be read, the power of Rome was shaken. No one could find in them any foundation for such doctrines as had, till then, gained ground, and many of Wickliffe's disciples died the cruel death of burning, rather than deny their purer faith. He was himself cited by the Pope to appear and answer for his "*heresies*," or false doctrines; and he might have answered his accusers in the words of St. Paul (Acts xxiv. 14,) "I confess unto thee, that after the way they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things that are written in the law and in the prophets." He boldly defended his doctrines before the bishops assembled in judgment against him, and would have been condemned to death, but that he was protected by John of Gaunt, who favoured his opinions. He was, therefore, allowed to end his days in peace, on his living of Lutterworth, although expelled from the university. He died in December 1384.

About thirty years after his death, his remains were dug up and burnt, and then scattered to the winds, by a decree of the Council of Constance; and thus did the Church of Rome show her paltry

malice against a man whose pen in his life shook her to her basis, and whose greatest sin in her eyes was his throwing open the Book of life to all who were desirous of salvation.

My beloved children, you can never sufficiently thank God for giving you His Word to be "a lamp to your feet, and a light about your path." Never let anything induce you to give up the right you have to read this precious book; and not only read, but "inwardly digest it." You are not likely now to be called upon to *die* for reading it, as in the days of Wickliffe; but if you were, it would even be better to die than to give it up. In the Revelation, St. John writes, "I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." (Rev. xx. 4.)

"I hold the sacred Word of God,
To hear, and keep, and use it, free;
But holy martyrs shed their blood
To win this Word of life for me.

With steady faith in Christ alone,
The threats of impious pow'r they spurn'd;
And, bold that holy faith to own,
They gave their bodies to be burn'd.

We bear, we'll hold the Christian name,
Though hell oppose, and earth deride;
We'll keep the faith through fear and shame,
That faith for which our fathers died."

Confess your Saviour on earth, and hold fast his Word, that you may live with him, and with the spirits of the just made perfect, in a happy eternity.

The first Lollard martyr in England was William Sawtree, a priest, who was burnt for refusing to worship the cross, and to believe in transubstantiation.

A king, who had obtained his crown by injustice, and kept it only by force, could not look for happiness. We are told that the latter days of Henry the fourth were passed in remorse and grief; not that true repentance, which would have induced him to restore the kingdom to its rightful sovereign, for Mortimer was still kept a prisoner. But in gloomy superstition, by long prayers, and useless penance, he strove to give peace to a guilty conscience; but "there is no peace to the wicked."

This unhappy man became prematurely old, a loathsome eruption broke out on his face, and at length he was seized with epileptic fits, one of which caused his death, as he was praying in Edward the Confessor's chapel at Westminster, on the 20th of

March, 1413, in the forty-sixth year of his age, and the fourteenth of his reign. He was twice married. His first wife, Mary de Bohun, left him four sons, Henry, prince of Wales ; Thomas, duke of Clarence ; John, duke of Bedford ; and Humphrey, duke of Gloucester ; and two daughters, Blanche and Philippa. His second wife, Isabella of Navarre, widow of the duke of Bretagne, had no children.

The Order of the Bath was instituted in this reign ; the knights wear a red ribbon.





CHAPTER XVIII.

HENRY THE FIFTH—FROM 1413 TO 1422.

THIS king, when prince of Wales, had caused his father great uneasiness by his wildness and love of pleasure, although even then he occasionally showed signs of a better disposition; for instance, it is said that, on one occasion, having insulted the chief justice Gascoyne, for refusing to release one of his wild companions, and the judge immediately committing him to prison, the young prince respectfully submitted. When his father heard of the transaction, he exclaimed, “Happy is the king who possesses a judge so resolute in the discharge of his duty, and a son so willing to submit to the laws!”

It was much to the credit of young Henry that, when he became king, he always treated this upright judge with the greatest distinction. No sooner did he come to the throne, than he laid aside all his bad habits, and tried to rule wisely. He dismissed his idle companions, and encouraged the good and the prudent to come around him. He did all in his

power to make his people happy and prosperous, and was especially kind to the poor. Indeed, when engaged in war with France, he was so careful that his troops should not oppress or ill-treat them, that in fact they met with greater kindness from these, the enemies of their country, than from their own nobles. This was a very good feature in the young monarch's character. David says, "Blessed is the man that considereth the poor and needy; the Lord will deliver him in the time of trouble." It is somewhat strange that, with so merciful a character he should yet have fallen into the two most prevalent errors of the times he lived in,—the love of war and the spirit of persecution against the Lollards. His false ideas of glory led him to make an unjust claim on the crown of France, which country was then distracted with civil war, arising from the long insanity of its poor king, Charles the sixth. The dukes of Orleans and Burgundy were struggling to get the unhappy king into their power. At length the duke of Burgundy contrived the assassination of his rival of Orleans, and then the struggle was kept up between him and the son of the late duke.

Henry the fifth took advantage of this time of confusion, to declare war against France, but the dau-

phin, (or eldest son of the French king,) only laughed at his pretensions, and in allusion to his character for wildness before he came to the throne, sent him a present of a number of tennis-balls. Henry in return promised to send him some London balls, which would bring his house about his ears, and he was as good as his word.

This French war was encouraged not only by the parliament and the country in general, but by the clergy. Hume, the historian, says that they found it to their interest to keep the people's minds engaged with war, to stop the spirit of inquiry which had taken possession of all men, and which, they foresaw, would lead to the overthrow of the church, and the consequent loss of all their enormous wealth ; that they preferred *giving* their money to maintain troops, to being forcibly deprived of it entirely. Whether or no this be true, it is very certain that they encouraged this most unjust expedition ; an inconsistent proceeding in those who were sent to preach the gospel of *peace !*

In 1415, Henry embarked a large army at Southampton, and took up a position before Harfleur, a strongly fortified place of great importance. This city he took after a siege of between five and six

weeks. But the marshy country which surrounded it caused much disease among his followers, and greatly reduced his army. He was imprudent enough to send away his ships, and march by land to Calais, a desperate undertaking under such circumstances. They had deep rivers to cross, and strongly fortified towns to pass by, while the sickness of the troops ill qualified them for the endurance of hardships. But they were devoted to their king, who shared cheerfully in all their privations; and the people of the places through which he passed, finding that the soldiers were allowed to commit no depredations, and that every thing required for their support was liberally paid for, supplied the English with provisions, in defiance of the commands of their own rulers.

At length, on the 24th of October, 1415, they met the French army, near the village of Agincourt, so far superior to the English in numbers, that it seemed like madness to attack them. But Henry's troops had imbibed too much of his sanguine spirit to be daunted even by such fearful odds as three to one. An officer who was sent to reconnoitre the enemy said, on his return, that "there were enough to kill, enough to take prisoners, and enough to run away."

The English were completely victorious; ten thou-

sand of the French were slain, most of them men of rank, while the English lost comparatively few. After this the pride of the French was so humbled that they were glad to accede to Henry's terms. Katherine, the daughter of Charles the sixth, was given to him in marriage, and he was declared heir to the crown of France after Charles's death.

I have told you that Henry the fifth was not free from the spirit of religious persecution. In his earlier days he had been on terms of intimate friendship with sir John Oldcastle, afterwards lord Cobham. This gentleman became a disciple of Wickliffe, much to Henry's grief, who did every thing in his power to wean him from what he thought heinous sin. But Cobham remained true to his convictions, and he was turned over to an assembly of bishops, who, being equally unsuccessful, committed him a prisoner to the Tower. He contrived to escape, however, and concealed himself in Wales ; but being suspected of seditious projects, he was taken and put to a death of lingering torture as a heretic and a rebel.

Arundel, the persecuting archbishop of Canterbury, soon after died, and was succeeded by Chichely, who was fully as ill disposed towards the poor Lollards. John Huss and Jerome of Prague were condemned by

the council of Constance in this reign ; and the Lollards everywhere suffered dreadfully from the persecutions of the Romanists.

After Henry had remained some time in England, having left the duke of Clarence in command of the army in France, he went back to that country on hearing that Clarence had been slain in battle. He left Katherine in England till the birth of their son Henry, at Windsor, and then the queen joined her husband at Paris. He had subdued all Normandy, and every thing seemed to prosper according to his wishes, when he was suddenly called to his account, being seized with an illness which caused his death, August 31, 1422, in the thirty-fourth year of his age, and the tenth of his reign. When near his end, he appointed the duke of Bedford regent of France, and the duke of Gloucester to the same office in England ; leaving his little son in the care of the earl of Warwick. Then turning his thoughts from earthly cares, he passed the remainder of his time in devotion.

His body was brought to England, and buried with great pomp in Westminster Abbey. And thus ended all his grand schemes of wealth and ambition, for which he had poured out the blood of his subjects like water. While his "inward thought was that his

house should continue for ever, his dwelling place to all generations," he was "cut off in the midst of his days," before even the afflicted king of France, whom he expected to succeed. Truly "God's ways are not as our ways;" He is "a God that hideth himself."

I have met with a remark in a history of England,* (which you may one day read with pleasure,) concerning the French wars at this period, worthy of remembrance. I have before said that war is one of the greatest afflictions which can befall any country, and that it is very wrong for a king to engage in it without good cause, as Henry did, as it brings misery on thousands. But God often permits a country to be tormented with fierce wars to punish its inhabitants for their wickedness; and as at this time the French had fallen into a dreadful state of sin, we may well believe that God employed the kings of England as scourges or instruments to punish them, and bring them back to a sense of right. "Because my people have forgotten me, saith the Lord, I will scatter them as with an east wind before the enemy." The judgments with which God declares He will punish a rebellious people, are war, famine, and pestilence. May our country long be preserved from such terrible

* Mrs. Markham's.

scourges, and may we turn unto the Lord God with all our hearts, that He may remember us in mercy, and not in wrath!

Katherine, the widow of Henry the fifth, married a Welsh gentleman, named Owen Tudor, and had two sons, Edmund, earl of Richmond, and Jasper, earl of Pembroke. Edmund had a son, who afterwards became king of England, although without just title, by the name of Henry the seventh.

Richard Whittington, "thrice lord mayor of London," lived in the reign of Henry the fifth. I doubt not most of my young readers have become acquainted with his history, and that of his cat, and almost thought it was a fabulous story, like "Jack the Giant-killer," &c. But Whittington was a real character, whatever his cat might be, and many public institutions of his founding still remain, and there is a stone on Highgate-hill marking the spot where he sat down and listened to the church-bells, till their merry peal cheered up his sinking heart, and seemed to call to to him, "Turn again, Whittington, thrice lord mayor of London!" Near to that spot is a public building, called Whittington College, instituted by him as an asylum for elderly females of respectable station but decayed fortune.



CHAPTER XIX.

HENRY THE SIXTH.—FROM 1422 TO 1461.

I AM now about to give you the history of a reign which is all filled up with rebellion and *civil war*; by civil war is meant when people of the same country fight against each other. It is, indeed, the very worst kind of war, and the very greatest affliction that can happen to any nation. Solomon says, (Eccle. x. 16) "Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child!" and the history of England at this time proves the wisdom of the remark. Henry the sixth was a baby only nine months old when his father died. The duke of Gloucester, familiarly spoken of as "the good duke Humphrey," and deservedly beloved by the people, watched over the interests of the little king in England; while the duke of Bedford, a man of wisdom and integrity, sought to support his claims in France. Charles the sixth, the insane king of that country, only survived Henry the fifth a few months; and the dauphin at once assumed the title of Charles the seventh. Bedford resisted him with all his power,

and among other wise measures, allowed the king of Scotland, who had so long been a prisoner in England, to be ransomed by his subjects ; and then made a treaty with them, so that the French were deprived of their aid in the war. Many battles were fought, with various success, much money was spent, and many a valuable life lost in this useless war, but all in vain. The French naturally clung to their own kings, and would by no means acknowledge Henry, though he was actually, when about eight years old, crowned at Paris.

A very extraordinary circumstance took place in France at this time. A young girl of obscure birth, named Joan d' Arc, believed herself inspired by God to expel the invaders of her country. The English were besieging Orleans, and Joan promised that they should be driven away, and that Charles should be crowned at Rheims. Roused by her courage and enthusiasm, the soldiers fought with new ardour, and their exertions were crowned with victory.

But Charles treated this young girl, who had rendered him so great a service, with the basest ingratitude. Having been taken prisoner by the English at Compeigne, she was tried and condemned on the charge of being a witch ; (for even grown-up people

were then ignorant and superstitious enough to believe in witches, ghosts, giants, and all such things as even sensible children now laugh it;) and much to the disgrace of the duke of Bedford, poor Joan was burnt in the market-place at Rouen; Charles not making the slightest effort to save her. "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes." The malice of her enemies could only hurt the body; but God, who strengthened this weak girl for the deliverance of her country, could keep her soul alive, and take her to dwell with Him in glory everlasting; and let us hope that this was indeed the blessed privilege of Joan of Arc.

In 1435, the duke of Bedford died, and the duke of York was sent to replace him. In 1445, the king of England, being then twenty-four years of age, married Margaret of Anjou, daughter of Reignier, the titular king of Sicily, but possessing no dominions. Henry agreed to give up to him the duchies of Anjou and Maine, to the indignation of the English, and the grief of the good duke of Gloucester, who foresaw the evils this marriage would bring upon the country.

Margaret was a woman of great beauty and talent, but utterly wanting in principle; and by her restless

ambition she led her husband into great trouble. They had one son named Edward.

Henry the sixth was a mild, amiable, and pious man, but deficient in the ability and energy necessary to keep in order a people so unruly as the English were then. His health was delicate, and his habits retired and studious, and his subjects soon became weary of so weak a king.

Queen Margaret never forgave the duke of Gloucester his opposition to her marriage, and in conjunction with his great enemy, cardinal Beaufort, and the duke of Suffolk, she aimed at ruining him. First they contrived that his wife should be accused of witchcraft, and banished to the Isle of Man; and then brought a charge of high treason against him; and although nothing could be proved in any wise to his discredit, he was imprisoned, and in a few days found dead in his bed. It was generally believed that Margaret and the cardinal had contrived his death, and, consequently, they became abhorred by the whole nation. Cardinal Beaufort died shortly after. His nephew, Beaufort, duke of Somerset, was sent to supplant the duke of York in France; a most unfortunate step for the royal family, since York, who had hitherto been faithful to their interests,

feeling himself injured, became their bitterest foe.

Through the mismanagement of the queen, and the dukes of Suffolk and Somerset, by the year 1450 all the English possessions in France were lost, with the single exception of Calais. The parliament accused Suffolk of high treason, and he was banished for five years. But this did not satisfy the people. The ship in which he embarked was pursued, and he was brought back to Dover, where he was beheaded in a boat, and his body left on the shore.

We now come to a most disastrous period in the history of our country,—the wars of York and Lancaster, called also the wars of the roses, from the circumstance of each party wearing a rose as a badge. The royalist, or Lancastrian party, adopting a red, and the Yorkist, a white rose ; a circumstance commemorated by Shakespeare thus :—

Plantaganet. Let him that is a true-born gentleman,
And stands upon the honour of his birth,
If he suppose that I have pleaded truth,
From off this briar pluck a *white rose* with me.

Somerset. Let him that is no coward, nor no flatterer,
But dare maintain the party of the truth,
Pluck a *red rose* from off this thorn with me.

You may perhaps have seen a beautiful red and white rose growing in the garden, which is called the York and Lancaster rose.

Henry the fourth, you will remember, had no right to the crown, but took it by force from Richard the second. He was the son of John of Gaunt, *third* son of Edward the third. But Lionel, duke of Clarence, was his *second* son, and therefore a nearer heir to the crown : he died before his father, Edward the third, but left an only daughter, Anne, who married her cousin Richard, son of the duke of York, and they had a son who was the next heir to the throne, in right of his mother. When the duke of York, who was descended from this branch of the family of Edward, was deprived of his regency in France by queen Margaret, he determined to avenge himself by putting forward his claim to the crown ; and Henry's meek, unambitious nature might perhaps have led him to relinquish the sovereignty to which he had no just title, but queen Margaret was far too proud and ambitious to allow of such a thing. Consequently, the country was plunged into all the miseries of civil war.

The people, generally, were much disaffected to the government, and many tumults took place. One

formidable insurrection, headed by Jack Cade, broke out in Kent. This man pretended to be of the noble family of Mortimer, and related to the duke of York, who was thought to connive at his pretensions, in order to take advantage of the confusion which ensued. The rebels encamped at Blackheath, and actually defeated at Sevenoaks an army sent to suppress them. Elated at this victory, Cade marched to London, and striking with his sword upon London stone,* he exclaimed, "now is Mortimer master of London." But he and his rabble were soon put down, and they dispersed on promise of a pardon. Cade himself was killed by a Kentish gentleman, as he was endeavouring to conceal himself in an orchard.

Soon after the suppression of this rebellion, Henry had a severe illness, which terminated in the loss of his reason; and the parliament appointed the duke of York protector till he should recover. He governed the country well and prudently, till at the end of nine months the king recovered his reason and resumed his authority. After a time the birth

* A large stone still preserved in the city of London, and believed to have been placed there by the Romans, who used it as a point from which to measure distances.

of a prince of Wales destroyed the duke's hope of succeeding to the crown, and raising an army on pretence of reforming the abuses of government, a great many battles were fought between the two parties. The duke was at length slain in the battle of Wakefield, and then, in derision, he was crowned with a wreath of grass, and beheaded. His head was stuck upon a pole, over one of the gates of York, to the savage delight of the cruel queen. He was succeeded in his titles by his son Edward, who defeated Margaret's forces at Mortimer's Cross, near Hereford. He then joined the earl of Warwick, and marched to London, where he was proclaimed king, 1461, by the title of Edward the fourth.

Margaret and her son were brought to great distress. She was again defeated at Hexham, and obliged to conceal herself with young Edward in a forest. Here she met a robber, but with great presence of mind, instead of trying to escape from him, she said, "Friend, I commend to thy care the son of good king Henry." The man proved faithful to her trust, and conducted them in safety to their friends.

Margaret struggled hard, but in vain, to have her good but feeble husband restored to the throne. At

length she and the prince were brought before the new king, who asked him how he dared to fight against him ; and on the brave boy answering him, "I came to recover my father's kingdom," he had the brutality to strike him across the face with his gauntlet, (or iron glove worn in battle,) and his brothers, the dukes of Clarence and Gloucester, who were standing by, stabbed him to the heart with their daggers. Margaret and king Henry were imprisoned in the Tower of London, where it is believed he was murdered by the wicked duke of Gloucester.

This has been a painful reign to write about, my dear children, and I have abridged the account of the civil wars as much as I could. I should have been glad to pass them over altogether, but these wars had so great an influence on the state of the country in future times, that I could not avoid saying something about them. The succession to the crown was restored to the right line, and the minds of men, convinced by such dreadful experience, of the blessings of peace, began to have a clearer understanding of the true welfare of nations. But much more blood was yet to be poured out before the wise purposes of God, regarding our country, were either fulfilled or com-

prehended. One very great blessing attendant on these civil wars, which yet was thought a great calamity at the time, was, the loss of all our possessions in France, except Calais ; so that when the country again became settled, the attention of the government was entirely devoted to home interests, instead of being taken off with the care of foreign possessions, which were never allowed to be held peaceably.

In these troubled days one very happy event occurred ; printing was invented. Before this, books were obliged to be written, and copied with pen and ink, which made them very scarce and expensive. There were no little books for children then, and what is worse, very few people possessed a Bible, and few even of the great and rich were taught to read. This is one principal reason why so much time was passed in fighting. People had nothing else to occupy their thoughts ; and there were no Sunday or Infant Schools, and indeed not many schools of any kind. But, when printing was invented, books became more common ; people began to read of their blessed Redeemer ; and in time a better spirit sprang up, and the light of the Gospel spread over the land, as you will find now in a very short time, if you read on

attentively. The first Bible that ever was printed, was at Mentz, in Germany, in 1450, and is, I believe, still to be seen. The art of printing was brought to England by William Caxton, in 1471, in the reign of Edward the fourth.

In Henry's time, the Azores, and Cape Verde islands, were discovered, and the library of the Vatican at Rome founded. Pumps were also invented at this period, and jewellery was first worn.





CHAPTER XX.

EDWARD THE FOURTH—FROM 1461 TO 1483.

I HAVE been looking through a great many histories of England to find something interesting to tell you of Edward the fourth, but he was really such a worthless character, I must pass him over with but short notice. It makes one quite sorry to think the good, kind old king Henry should have met with so many sorrows, been driven from the throne, and at last murdered, for the sake of this unworthy Edward. But we may hope that Henry was removed from a world of trouble to dwell in everlasting peace with the God and Saviour he loved, and this is far better than to be a king on earth.

Edward the fourth owed his crown to the earl of Warwick, a celebrated general, called the king-maker, because he sometimes fought for Edward, and at others for Henry; and that side always triumphed on which he commanded. At length, when fighting on the Lancastrian side, he was killed at Barnet, where a battle was fought on Easter Sunday,

1471. Margaret of Anjou was finally defeated at the battle of Tewkesbury, and Edward then held peaceable possession of the crown. He was exceedingly handsome, and many persons were foolish enough to love him because of his beauty, when his cruel and deceitful heart ought rather to have caused him to be avoided by those who loved God. He married lady Elizabeth Grey, the widow of a Lancastrian gentleman ; a union which led to many quarrels between her relations and those of the king, and was generally displeasing to the nation. Edward became involved in a dispute with his own brother, the duke of Clarence, who, being of a rash, unguarded temper, soon let fall some expressions, which the cruel king interpreted as treasonable, and caused him to be condemned to death ; as a last favour allowing him to choose his own mode of execution.

Clarence made a strange choice, if history speaks truly. It is said he decided on being drowned in a cask of malmsey wine. Aunt Anne is inclined to think this is only a figurative manner of saying he drank himself to death. But whatever may be the true statement, one thing is very clear, that Clarence was not at all prepared to die ; and it is very shocking

to think of his going to death and judgment in a state of mind so unlike that of a Christian.

I wish you to observe, my dear children, how much safer and better are the times we live in, than those of which you have just been reading. Some people are very fond of talking of "*the good old times,*" and wish to bring them back again; but for Aunt Anne's part, she very much prefers her own days, when men cannot be thrown into prison and killed, just to please some great person. *Now*, when any one is accused of a crime, he must be fairly tried, and may have as many witnesses as he likes to prove his innocence, if he can; and if, after all, he is found guilty, and it is necessary he should die, good, pious clergymen visit him, to pray with, and read to him, and try to turn his poor guilty heart to repentance, that even at the eleventh hour, he may take hold on the Lord Jesus Christ, and be saved in the next world, though he must be punished in this.

In the year 1479, a dreadful pestilence ravaged the whole country. An old chronicler says, "that in four months there perished more than thrice the number of those who had died in fifteen years of civil warfare." Heavily, indeed, was the hand of the Lord lain upon our afflicted land, smarting with

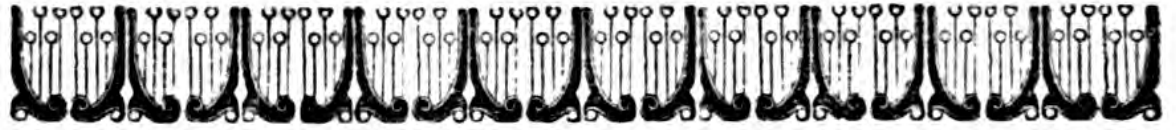
the just chastisement of her many crimes. The Lancastrian party were treated with the utmost harshness during the reign of Edward. Many of the nobility were reduced to absolute beggary. The duke of Exeter actually begged his bread barefoot in London, and a lady Neville, a relative of the earl of Warwick, supported herself by needlework as long as she could, and when that failed, was obliged to beg.

So many of the nobility were killed in the wars, that Edward was obliged to create many new peers to fill their places. His own brothers, George and Richard, he made dukes of Clarence and Gloucester. The fate of Clarence I have already told you. Of the wicked Richard, duke of Gloucester, you will shortly hear more. He was, indeed, unworthy to bear the title of the "good duke Humphrey" of Gloucester, who had been so much beloved when acting as regent for the baby-king Henry.

Edward the fourth encouraged commerce, and was even in some sort a merchant himself, as he had some trading vessels; and it was a fashion in those days for people of rank to engage in commercial speculations. This king passed nearly all his time in sloth and self-indulgence. He never denied himself a single gratification, whether innocent or unlawful, and "he

gathered the fruit of the tree which he planted," for he ruined his constitution by his excesses, and was "cut off in the midst of his days," by a fever brought on by over-indulgence at table. Although he "did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord," he well knew what was right, and, shortly before his death, gave many directions to lord Rivers, the governor of the young prince of Wales, to bring him up virtuously and religiously. He died April 9, 1483, in the forty-second year of his age and the twenty-third of his reign. He left two sons, Edward and Richard, and five daughters, the eldest of whom married Henry, earl of Richmond, afterwards Henry the seventh.





CHAPTER XXI.

EDWARD THE FIFTH—RICHARD THE THIRD—
FROM 1483 TO 1485.

WHEN Edward the fourth died, his two little boys were under the care of lord Rivers, their mother's brother. The eldest was thirteen, the youngest nine. As they were so young, the late king's brother, Richard, duke of Gloucester, was made protector, to manage the affairs of the kingdom till Edward should be old enough to do so himself. But this "bold, bad man" had no intention that either of his nephews should ever reign. Under pretence of desiring to remove the children from their mother and lord Rivers into safer keeping, he put both the children into the Tower of London, and then caused nearly all their friends, on various false accusations, to be beheaded or imprisoned. He privately ordered Brackenbury, the governor of the Tower, to murder his nephews; and finding him too conscientious to obey so iniquitous a command, removed him, and put into his place sir James Tyrrel, who caused the poor boys

to be smothered, as they lay asleep in each other's arms. For a long time, although strongly suspected, this deed of darkness was not certainly known ; but two hundred years afterwards, in altering a staircase in the Tower, the workmen found a chest buried beneath it, in which were the bones of two children about their age. They were removed to Westminster Abbey to be buried, and had a monument placed over them by order of the king, Charles the second.

By a great deal of cunning contrivance, this horrid murderer caused himself to be proclaimed king, by the title of Richard the third. But although from fear he was suffered to reign, the people too thoroughly detested this inhuman monster to leave him in peace. Among those who had helped to place him on the throne was the duke of Buckingham, who had been very liberally rewarded by Richard for his assistance, but wanted still more, and was discontented because his wishes were not gratified. So true is it that the wicked have no real friends, and that those who aid them in their sinful courses will always be ready to turn against them on the slightest provocation.

Richard was of the house of York, but there was a Lancastrian, named Henry Tudor, earl of Richmond, grandson of Katherine, widow of Henry the fifth.

He had no right whatever to the crown, but the people held the murderer Richard in such abhorrence, that many wished to make Richmond king instead of him. The dissatisfied duke of Buckingham, and Morton, bishop of Ely, were among the first to propose it, and soon raised a small army, which increased as they proceeded.

Richard was prepared to meet them, and Buckingham falling into his power, he caused him to be beheaded. He might have quelled this insurrection without great difficulty, but that he had not a single friend in whom he could confide, and an awful description of a man struggling under the horrors of a guilty conscience is given us of Richard by sir Thomas More : “ He never had quiet in his mind ; never thought himself sure : when he went abroad his eyes whirled about ; his hand was on his dagger : his countenance and manner like one ever ready to strike again ; he took ill rest at night ; lay long waking and musing, sore wearied with care and watching ; rather slumbered than slept ; troubled with frightful dreams ; sometimes he started up, and ran about the chamber ; so was his restless heart continually tossed and tumbled.”

Shakespeare represents Richard starting from his

sleep on the morning of his last battle, when he had been haunted in his dreams by the shadows of those whose blood cried out for vengeance against him.

“ My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,
And every tongue brings in a several tale,
And every tale condemns me for a villain.
Perjury, perjury, in the high'st degree,
Murder, stern murder, in the dir'st degree ;
All several sins, all us'd in each degree,
Throng to the bar, crying all,—Guilty, guilty !
I shall despair. There is no creature loves me :
And if I die, no soul will pity me :—
Nay, wherefore should they ? since that I myself
Find in myself no pity to myself.
Methought the souls of all that I had murdered,
Came to my tent ; and every one did threat
To-morrow's vengeance on the head of Richard.”

The armies met at Bosworth, and Richard soon found how little he could depend on the fidelity of his adherents. Lord Stanley deserted him with all his followers, and joined Richmond. The duke of Norfolk found affixed to his tent a paper on which was written,

“ Jockey of Norfolk, be not too bold,
For Dickon your master is bought and sold.”

But he remained faithful to his trust, and was slain

in the battle. The struggle was desperate. Richard, who was naturally brave, seemed to gain strength from despair, and fought with tiger-like fury, till he fell covered with wounds, overpowered by numbers.

When Richmond found his enemy was dead, he knelt down and returned thanks to the Lord of hosts for his victory, and Lord Stanley, taking the crown from Richard's battered helmet, placed it upon his head.

The body of Richard was thrown across a horse, and carried to Leicester, where, after being exposed to view a few days, it was buried in the church of the Grey Friars. But he was not allowed to remain in his resting-place ; for in the reign of Henry the eighth, on the destruction of the monasteries, his remains were disinterred, and his stone coffin was long used as a horse-trough at one of the inns of Leicester.

The battle of Bosworth field took place on the 23rd of August, 1485, when Richard had reigned two years. He was the last of the Plantagenets, that is, of the descendants of Henry the second, who was, you will remember, the son of Geoffrey Plantagenet, earl of Anjou. The family derived their name from having a sprig of broom, the Latin name of which is *planta genista*, for their badge or crest.

It is very sad to have to relate so many stories of bloodshed, and I am glad to have come to the end of these fighting reigns ; for now you will find they get on rather more peaceably.

Knowledge gradually increased even in these turbulent times. Literature of all kinds improved, and some of the poetry attributed to this era is very good. The pretty ballad of "the Babes in the Wood," which is, I doubt not, known to most of my young readers, was composed in this reign, and founded on the murder of his two nephews by Richard.

Wickliffe's followers became more numerous, and in proportion as people were better educated, they perceived that the religion taught by our Saviour and His apostles was very different from that professed throughout the country. Thus the way was opening for the Reformation, which, in less than fifty years from this time swept away the errors of many centuries, and let in a flood of light upon the nations, which has gone on increasing to the present time ; and which, by God's grace, will go on spreading from country to country, all over the world, until our blessed Lord shall come again to reign in person over His people who love Him and look for His coming.

It is interesting to know the origin of places of

public education which have tended to the increase of learning and wisdom in our land, so I will here tell you of the foundation of several colleges of this century. Henry the sixth laid the first stone of King's College Chapel, Cambridge, in 1441. This is one of the most beautiful ecclesiastical buildings in the country. His queen, Margaret of Anjou, founded Queen's College, Cambridge; to Henry the sixth we are also indebted for Eton College, which was at first intended for the education of only seventy boys, though it is now greatly extended.

Unscrupulous as was Richard the third in the means he adopted to obtain his power, he made by no means a bad ruler. He insisted on the right administration of the laws, and passed some which reflect credit on his reign. Among other regulations, he diminished the number of retainers whom it was then the fashion for great men to have about them; idle followers who wore their badge, and feasted in their castles, and were ever ready to enter into their masters' quarrels on the slightest grounds. To give you some idea how serious an evil this had become, I will tell you of the state in which the earl of Warwick, the king-maker, lived. Thirty-thousand men were daily maintained at his various castles and manors;

and when he visited London, he came with a train of 600 men, all in red jackets, with his badge of the bear and ragged staff embroidered on the sleeve. Six oxen were daily consumed in his house for breakfast, and all persons acquainted with any of his household, might come and take away as much meat as they could carry on their daggers. The dagger was used then as we use a table-knife, a luxury unknown to these great men.* It is stated, in the "Northumberland's family book," that the breakfast for an earl and his countess was, "a loaf of bread in trenchers, two manchets, or small loaves of the finest flour, weighing each six ounces ; a quart of beer, a quart of wine ; two pieces of salt fish ; six baconed (or pickled) herrings, and four white herrings, or a dish of sprats." This was a *fast-day* allowance. On other days the fish at breakfast was replaced by mutton or beef.

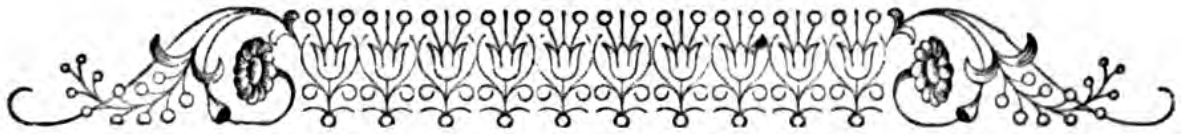
The last time I told you of the dress of these dark ages, it was the fashion for gentlemen to wear ridiculously long points to their shoes. In the reign of Richard the third, they were as ridiculously broad ; so that he made a law that no one was to wear them more than six inches in breadth. Edward the fourth

* Farr's "History of England."

introduced the fashion of wearing excessively tight jackets, with such immense hanging sleeves, that he used to tie his behind him when he went out, for fear of treading on them. The ladies used to wear tall caps, in the shape of a church spire, about a yard high, with long streamers hanging from the top. It is no wonder that the clergy preached against such fopperies as these, and that grave statesmen thought it necessary to make laws for the better regulation of the toilette.

Worse than all these follies, however, was the shocking practice of swearing, which at this time disgraced the national character, and which brought the English into deserved contempt on the continent. It is mentioned, by an historian of Henry the sixth, as a praiseworthy singularity in him, that he neither fell into this profane custom himself, nor allowed it in others, but always reprov'd any whom he found to be addicted to this evil habit, which is in direct violation of the word of God, and has often brought fearful judgments on those who practise it.





CHAPTER XXII.

HENRY THE SEVENTH.—FROM 1485 TO 1509.

HENRY the seventh, aware of his want of title to the throne, thought it advisable to strengthen his position by marrying Elizabeth of York, the eldest daughter of Edward the fourth, who, after the murder of her two brothers, was heiress to the kingdom. But he was of a gloomy, cold, unamiable temper, and made but an unkind, neglectful husband. Elizabeth, on the contrary, was of a sweet and gentle character, never interfering with public affairs, but trying to win her husband's affection, and devoting herself to the early training and education of her children.

It is pleasant in the stormy pages of history to meet with, here and there, so Christian a character, and this is why I have mentioned Elizabeth of York, who would otherwise have been passed over unnoticed; her quiet and feminine disposition keeping her name unconnected with any of the government measures of the day. She was just such a wife as is described in the opening verses of the third chapter of St. Peter's

first epistle, and as *unlike* her proud, ambitious, predecessor, Margaret of Anjou, as possible.

Henry's dislike to the Yorkists was so great, that his very first act on being proclaimed king was, to imprison in the Tower the young Edward, earl of Warwick, son of the duke of Clarence, who was said to have been drowned in malmsey wine. Two years afterwards, a young man of low birth, named Lambert Simnel, instructed by Simon, a priest of Oxford, passed himself off as this very earl of Warwick, and persuaded a great many people who were friendly to the Yorkists, to join his standard. He began his imposture in Ireland, where it was more difficult to find it out. He was actually crowned in Dublin by the title of Edward the sixth, a diadem worn by an image of the Virgin Mary being used for the purpose. As the simplest way of putting an end to the plot, Henry caused the real earl of Warwick to be taken from the Tower, and paraded through the principal streets of London, and this satisfied most people. But Simnel's Irish adherents remained true to him, and the duchess of Burgundy sent him some German troops. But they did not find the English disposed to join them. However, they continued their march till they met Henry's army at Stoke, near Newark, and

were totally defeated by him. Simon, the priest, was imprisoned for life, and Simnel was made a scullion in the king's kitchen, and passed the remainder of his life in his service.

In the year 1492, there was a more serious rebellion, headed by a young man named Perkin Warbeck, but who asserted himself to be Richard Plantagenet, the younger of the two murdered princes. He admitted the death of the elder, but said that he had escaped, and was now come to claim his inheritance. He was of singularly pleasing manners, and so strongly resembled the Plantagenets in countenance, that many believed him to be really the person he represented. The duchess of Burgundy, sister of Edward the fourth, who always took every opportunity of harassing and annoying Henry, received Warbeck as her nephew, and called him "the white rose of England." In 1493 he landed at Deal, with a few hundred followers, but some were taken prisoners, and the others returned to their ships, and sailed for Flanders.

In 1496 he went to Scotland, and so thoroughly impressed the king, James the fourth, with the truth of his story, that he gave him in marriage the lady Catherine Gordon, daughter of the earl of Huntley, and a relation of his own ; she was one of the

most beautiful and accomplished ladies of the Scotch court. James resolved to aid him in his pretensions to the crown of England ; but he found the English so averse to his pretensions that he soon returned, after having crossed the border ; and shortly concluded a treaty with Henry, by which Warbeck was deprived of his aid. He next tried his fortune in Cornwall, but was defeated near Taunton. After taking refuge at Beaulieu, in Hampshire, he was induced to surrender himself to the king, who imprisoned him in the Tower. Here he became acquainted with the earl of Warwick ; and together they contrived a plan of escape, but it was discovered, and they were both put to death. Warbeck being hanged at Tyburn, and Warwick beheaded on Tower hill.

The execution of the latter was a great blot on Henry's character. His long imprisonment had so blunted the young earl's faculties, that he was almost an idiot. Henry was induced to commit this crime by his desire to contract a marriage between his son Arthur, the prince of Wales, and Catherine of Arragon, daughter of Ferdinand, king of Spain ; but Ferdinand refused, saying, that Henry's title to the crown would never be sure while the earl of Warwick lived. But this is one instance, among many others

recorded in this little history, of the manner in which God interposes to prevent men attaining the prosperity they sought by crime. The marriage took place, but the young prince died six months after. You will like to hear what became of Perkin Warbeck's beautiful wife, lady Catherine Gordon. She was sincerely attached to her unworthy husband, and the king was so touched by her beauty and her grief, that he spoke kindly to her, and gave her some office about the queen. After some years she was again married to sir Matthew Cradock, and passed the rest of her life in retirement.

Henry put every one to death whom he could discover to have been in Warbeck's interest. Even sir William Stanley was beheaded, for merely saying that, "if Perkin Warbeck were the real duke of York, he would never bear arms against him."

This great severity intimidated people from making any more plots against him, and he was free to the end of his reign from any open show of dislike, although he was never a popular king, from his gloomy manners and avaricious disposition. He employed himself in trying to improve the commerce of the country, by making treaties with foreign states to the great benefit of England. But his ruling

passion being the love of money, he was very unscrupulous as to the means he used to obtain it. "He that maketh haste to be rich, shall not be innocent," says Solomon ; and certainly it is far better to have "the blessing of the Lord, which maketh rich, and bringeth no sorrow with it." Henry could not expect to receive this blessing, for he obtained money by fraud and injustice. He employed two lawyers, named Dudley and Empson, to hunt out old forgotten laws, and put them in force ; and made new ones, both severe and vexatious ; and when they were broken, instead of inflicting the proper punishment, he suffered them to escape by paying heavy fines. Thus, you see, a great deal of injustice was done ; for the rich could always get off by fines or bribes, while the poor were imprisoned or executed, because they had not the means of satisfying the king's avarice.

When Henry was in his last illness, his conscience reproached him with his unjust gains, and he thought to *buy* peace to his soul by sacrificing part of his beloved money. He ordered some of that which had been forced from offenders above what the law allowed, to be paid back again ; and he also desired that the debts of all people imprisoned in London and Westminster for sums not exceeding forty shillings

should be paid. Then he arranged that two thousand masses (or services), at sixpence each, should be said for the repose of his soul after his death.

This was one of the mistakes of popery, to suppose that a sinful soul could be saved by the prayers of other people after death. How much happier would Henry have been on his death-bed, had he learned in life to seek for the true riches, "the pearl of great price," instead of "lading his soul with the thick clay" of ill-gotten wealth, wrung from the sorrows and crimes of his oppressed people! Read the first seven verses of the fifth chapter of St. James, my dear children, and be early warned of the misery brought upon us by too great a love of money, which St. Paul says is "the root of all evil." Henry the seventh died at Richmond, April 21, 1509, in the twenty-fourth year of his reign. He was succeeded by his second son Henry, who married the widow of his eldest brother, Arthur. Margaret, his eldest daughter, married James the fourth of Scotland, and Mary, his youngest child, married first Louis the twelfth of France, and afterwards Brandon, duke of Suffolk.

The discovery of America was made in this reign, by Christopher Columbus, a native of Genoa, sent

out for the purpose by Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain. This was in the year 1492.

Henry the seventh encouraged learning more than had been the custom in the preceding reigns. Ladies began to be better educated ; for in addition to the household accomplishments of needlework, confectionery, surgery, and music, they were now taught reading and writing, and sometimes even Latin and French ; thus they became more intelligent companions and wives, and less addicted to gadding about the country in search of amusement.

A very beautiful style of architecture was introduced at this period, called the *florid*, on account of the profusion of its ornaments. It was brought in by Henry's desire to have a magnificent monument. For this purpose he began to build what is called Henry the seventh's chapel, in Westminster Abbey, but he died leaving it unfinished, and his son, Henry the eighth, completed it.

A curious story is told of the way in which this king enforced his laws, especially when there was money to be gained by doing so. He went one day to pay a visit to lord Oxford, who summoned a large number of retainers to do honour to his royal guest. These men were drawn up in line at the gate when

the king departed. Turning to his host, he made some remark on the number of his household servants. But on hearing that they were retainers who wore his badge on such occasions to do him honour, the king exclaimed, "My lord, I thank you for your good cheer, but my laws must not be broken in my very sight. I must send my lawyer to you." The earl was fined 15,000 marks, that is 10,000*l*.

Henry's encouragement of commerce led to the improvement of the navy; and some larger vessels than had ever have been known before were built, and maps and charts began to be commonly used. The discovery of America by Columbus, led to other discoveries. Sebastian Cabot, son of a Venetian merchant, a native of Bristol, was sent out by Henry with a small fleet of ships, and sailing to the north-west, he saw Newfoundland, the island of St. John's, and Virginia, which name was afterwards given to the country he then discovered, in honour of the virgin queen Elizabeth, grand-daughter of Henry the seventh. Shillings were first coined in this reign, and Greek began to be taught in schools.



CHAPTER XXIII.

HENRY THE EIGHTH—FROM 1509 TO 1547.

HENRY THE EIGHTH was nineteen when he ascended the throne. Every worldly advantage appeared to be his. He was handsome in person, lively, and pleasing in manner, was well educated for the times he lived in, and being alike descended from the families of York and Lancaster, his claim to the crown was universally admitted. His father had left him immensely rich, and the country was not engaged in any kind of war. But with all these advantages to begin with, we shall find them in a great measure thrown away by his violent temper and want of self-control, which prevented him from denying himself a single pleasure, even when it had to be procured by the shedding of innocent blood.

I shall confine myself principally to the greatest event of this reign, "the Reformation," that is, the reforming, or clearing from error the religion of our country, which was at this time the Roman Catholic.

In the first part of Henry's reign, every thing

seemed to go on prosperously. He punished Dudley and Empson, the two lawyers who had helped the late king to extort so much money from his subjects, and chose wise and experienced men for his advisers. But his fondness of pleasure, and excessive extravagance, soon caused his father's wealth to disappear. His friends in vain pointed out to him the folly of his conduct ; and at last Fox, bishop of Winchester, one of his wisest counsellors, introduced to him a priest named Wolsey, in the hope that he might succeed in restraining the young king. But it soon appeared that the bishop was deceived in Wolsey's character. Instead of giving Henry good advice, he encouraged him in all his follies, and flattered him, in order to procure his own advancement. He was soon made a cardinal, the highest dignity in the Roman Catholic church next to the Pope, and hoped in time even to be elected to the popedom, but in this he was disappointed.

In the fourth year of Henry's reign, being ambitious of military glory, he made a very unnecessary war on France, defeating the duke de Longueville at Terouenne, when the French ran away so fast that it was called "the battle of spurs."

Soon after peace was made with France, and the

king, Louis the twelfth, married Henry's youngest sister, Mary, but dying very soon, was succeeded by one of the most celebrated of the French kings, Francis the first.

In 1512, there was also a battle between the English and Scotch at Flodden Field, near the Cheviot hills, in which the Scotch were defeated, and their gallant king, James the fourth, killed.

At this time, Martin Luther was preaching in Germany against the errors of the Romish Church, as Wickliffe had already done in England. The world has never at any time been left without some witnesses for the truth in it; but in the course of ages, many errors had crept into the church. For instance (as I have elsewhere said), the Pope, or bishop of Rome, had insisted on being considered as the head of the whole body of Christians throughout the world; and he not only made himself chief in all affairs relating to religion, assuming the power of forgiveness of sins, of releasing men from their oaths, &c., but for some time had interfered in *temporal*, or worldly matters; and set himself up as superior to every sovereign in Christendom. This, you see, my dear children, is in direct opposition to the precepts of the Gospel. Our blessed Saviour said, "My

kingdom is not of this world," and set us the example of submitting to our rulers ; for even He paid tribute to Cæsar. (Matt. xvii. 24—27.)

Many other errors were there, such as praying to the Virgin Mary and the saints, bowing down to images and to crosses, and believing in seven sacraments, while we Protestants only recognize two,—Baptism and the Lord's Supper,—because we find in Scripture that these two only were especially appointed by our Redeemer ; and we hold that the Scriptures contain all things necessary to our salvation ; as St. Paul says to Timothy, "The holy Scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus." But the popes did not, and to this day do not, allow the Bible to be read by the people ; and with the exception of Wickliffe's translation, there were neither Bibles nor prayer-books at this time, but such as were written in Latin, which comparatively few persons understood. And you remember, that any one found out reading Wickliffe's Bible was liable to be burnt. With the general improvement in education, which followed the invention of printing, a great thirst for the knowledge of the truth arose, and a conviction of the falsehood of much that had been hitherto

taught as truth. The preaching of Wickliffe, Luther, Melancthon, and others, had led many, even at peril of their lives, to "search the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so; therefore, many of them believed." (Acts xvii. 11, 12.)

In 1517, Luther struck the first blow against popery in Germany, and in a very few years it was followed up heartily in England. Wolsey was greatly opposed to the Reformation, and Henry at first was of his opinion, and even wrote a book in defence of the seven sacraments, dedicating it to Leo the tenth, the reigning pope, who was so much pleased with it, that he gave him the title of "Defender of the Faith," which the sovereigns of England have borne ever since.

But Henry's heart was not right with God; he did not act with a sincere desire to do His will, and as is always the case with irreligious men, his conduct was inconsistent. He wished to marry a beautiful lady named Anne Boleyn, although Katherine of Arragon, his first wife, was still living, and had been a good and faithful wife to him; but she was a Romanist, and much opposed to the Reformation. Anne Boleyn favoured the Protestants; and for this reason Wolsey would not consent that Henry

should put away Katherine and marry her. Henry, whose temper would not brook the slightest contradiction, quarrelled with the cardinal who had so long been his favourite, and sent him away from court in disgrace. Wolsey had been a proud, ambitious man, fond of wealth and pleasure, and living more like a king than a minister of the Gospel. But there is reason to hope that adversity touched his heart, and improved him, for he submitted with great humility to Henry's displeasure. The king deprived him of all his property, even to his clothes, and the cardinal, in sickness and sorrow, took refuge in Leicester Abbey, saying to the abbot (according to Shakespeare,)

O, father abbot,
An old man, broken with the storms of state,
Is come to lay his weary bones among you;
Give him a little earth for charity.

Of all his followers one only remained true to him in his disgrace, Thomas Cromwell, who afterwards entered the king's service, and was made earl of Essex. "Had I been as faithful to my God as to my king," said Wolsey, "He would not have forsaken me in my grey hairs." Let us hope that his repentance

was sincere, and that, even at this eleventh hour, he found acceptance with his Lord and Saviour. He died November 29, 1530.

A young man, named Cranmer, succeeded Wolsey in Henry's favour, which he retained till the death of the king. The marriage with Anne Boleyn took place, and she became the mother of a daughter, afterwards queen Elizabeth. Henry had quarrelled with the Pope, because he refused to let him put away Katherine, and would no longer acknowledge him as head of the church of England, claiming that title himself, although in many other respects he continued to hold the doctrines of popery. Nothing could exceed the savage violence of Henry's proceedings. He caused numbers of papists to be executed for denying his *supremacy*, or right to be head, or chief, of the church of England, among whom were the lord chancellor, sir Thomas More, and the venerable Dr. Fisher, bishop of Rochester, who had been Henry's tutor. Both these sufferers were men of distinguished piety and learning. Protestants, on the other hand, were put to death for refusing to believe in the popish doctrines Henry still retained, and especially that of transubstantiation.

Still the Reformation progressed in England.

Cranmer, who was made archbishop of Canterbury, exerted himself to the utmost to carry it on. At the same time we must remember, dear children, that it never could have been brought about by human efforts alone. The blessing of the Almighty was upon it; and as He first caused the glad tidings of the Gospel to be proclaimed and spread abroad by twelve poor, uneducated men, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, so now, from very small beginnings, and in the first instance through the preaching of Luther,

“That solitary monk who shook the world,”

He ordained that the light of true religion should once more burst through the clouds of ignorance and superstition.

Cranmer was a man of sincere piety and single-mindedness. The one object of his life was the reforming of religion; and this he maintained not only against the king's alternate caprice and violence, but also in spite of his own timidity of character, which sometimes betrayed him into weaknesses of which he afterwards deeply repented. Doubtless, like St. Paul, Cranmer prayed against this infirmity, and received the same assurance of assistance from his Lord: “My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is

made perfect in weakness." (2 Cor. xii. 9.) I say "*doubtless*," because in another reign we shall find this pious man nobly triumphing over his weakness, which, you know, he could not have done in *his own* strength. It is a great proof of Cranmer's integrity of character, that Henry always contrived to send him out of the way when he was planning some of his deeds of wickedness, because he knew they would not be sanctioned by the archbishop.

One of Cranmer's chief desires was to have a good translation of the Scriptures made for general circulation, as Wickliffe's only contained the Gospels and portions of the Old Testament. Henry opposed him for a long time, but at length yielded. The work took four years to accomplish, and when at last it was completed, and thrown open to the public, thousands of people thronged to hear the Word of life read in their own tongue, as travellers in the scorching desert, parched with thirst, rush eagerly to the refreshing stream, and drink and bathe with a rapture no others can conceive. The Bibles at first used to be kept chained to a reading-desk, for fear people should, in their joy, be tempted to carry them away. And there, hour after hour, old men and women, young mothers with their babes, and

sturdy yeomen, were to be found listening breathless to the blessed tidings of salvation, till the tears ran down their faces with gratitude and love to the holy Son of God, who died to procure it for them.

Dear children, do not your hearts warm to think how great a privilege it was for those who had never before enjoyed it? Only think; no Bible! Why, what would you do if you had not one? What would papa and mamma do without a Bible to teach their beloved children about their Saviour, and to learn how to train them in the nurture of the Lord? Why, if any king, or pope *now* were to command all the Bibles to be taken out of the country, the very heavens would be rent with the cries, and groans, and prayers of the people; and not a man, no, nor a child, but would stand up to defend his right to possess the Word of God. "I rejoice at Thy word as one that findeth great spoil." "I love Thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold." "The law of Thy mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver." (Ps. cxix.) Yes, dear little ones, it is better indeed for you to love, to possess, and to follow the Word of God, than to have all the wealth of the universe, for "What is a man profited if he gain the

whole world, and lose his own soul ?” said our blessed Saviour Himself. But I have suffered my pleasure in this part of my subject to draw me away from the continuation of Henry’s reign.

Katherine of Arragon died soon after her tyrannical husband had put her away from him. He would not even allow her the comfort of her daughter Mary’s society, and I am sorry to say that Anne Boleyn was not at all kind to Mary. Indeed, she does not appear to have been an amiable woman. Her manners were too free, and unladylike, wanting the softening influence of true religion.

Henry soon became tired of her, and under pretence of her having been a bad wife to him, he caused her to be thrown into prison, and tried for her life. In those days there was little real justice in the land, and although not a single charge was proved against Anne, she was condemned and beheaded. Before her death, she begged lady Kingston, the wife of the governor of the Tower, on her knees, to convey to the princess Mary a message of regret for her unkindness to her, and begging her to be as a mother to her own little orphan babe, Elizabeth ; a charge which Mary faithfully fulfilled.

The very day after the execution of Anne Boleyn,

Henry married Jane Seymour, one of her maids of honour, who became the mother of a little prince, afterwards Edward the sixth. But she died when her little boy was only a few days old, so that he had no kind mother to train him in the way of righteousness ; but God, who took her from him, early provided him with a friend who did not suffer him to be neglected. Archbishop Cranmer was his godfather, and we shall find how well he kept in mind the duties of this serious office.

Some time after the death of Jane Seymour, Henry wished to marry again. Cromwell, the faithful friend of Wolsey, who had entered the service of the king, and risen to be chancellor, being a zealous friend of the Reformation, was anxious that his royal master should marry a Protestant lady, and showed him a portrait, by Holbein, of the princess Anne of Cleves, which so much pleased him, that he immediately sent Cromwell to ask the consent of her friends to the marriage, and to bring her to England. But the portrait had been flattered ; the princess was plain, and ungraceful in manner ; besides which, she could not speak a word of English, and the coarse, unfeeling Henry behaved very rudely to her. He married her, however, but caused poor Cromwell to

be beheaded, and then immediately set about getting himself unmarried again by act of parliament, and gave Anne permission to go back to her family. But she preferred remaining in England, and passed the rest of her life in retirement at Richmond, rather agreeably surprised, I dare say, to find she had still a head on her shoulders. After this the king married Katherine Howard, a niece of the duke of Norfolk ; but finding out in a few months that she had not been a good woman, he caused her to be beheaded, as well as some of her friends, because they had not informed him of her faults. About a year after, Henry married his sixth, and last wife, Katherine Parr, widow of lord Latimer, a strict Protestant, and a pious and prudent woman, who by her gentleness and good sense retained the respect of the tyrannical king till his death, although even *her* head was at one time in danger, because she ventured to defend some Protestant doctrines in his presence. But her "soft answer turned away the wrath" of the king, and saved her life.

Now a few words more about the Reformation, and then we must bring this long reign to a close. I told you that Henry's extravagance soon caused the wealth left him by his father to vanish ; and he was very

ready to listen to the advice of his courtiers, and make a pretended zeal for religion a cloak under which to seize the property of the church. He destroyed most of the monasteries, or houses where people lived together for the purposes of study, prayer, and meditation. In the early ages of Christianity (as I mentioned in the history of our Saxon forefathers) these buildings had been of very great use in times of persecution, as *sanctuaries*, or places of asylum for the poor hunted Christians, and thus helped to preserve alive the true faith in its infancy. And not religion only, but learning of all kinds was indebted to them for nurture and shelter. The poor had always found assistance there, and as the knowledge of medicine and surgery was also cultivated in them, "suffering humanity" had often found relief to soul and body from these religious houses. But you know, dear children, everything, however good in itself, is in this world apt to become tainted by sin, and much of corruption, deceit, and wickedness, had crept into most of these societies, although the charges brought against them were probably greatly exaggerated, in order to give some colour of justice to the king's violence. He ordered the monasteries to be pulled down, their property seized, and their inhabitants to be driven

out into the wide world, without home or shelter, and great misery must necessarily have resulted from such cruelty ; but “surely the wrath of man shall praise God, the remainder of wrath shall He restrain.” The tyranny and injustice of this savage man have been turned by a merciful God to the lasting benefit of our country, while the sorrow and calamity endured by individuals have passed away like a dream. The money and estates thus procured, Henry either kept himself, or gave to his dependents and favourites, and you will find many abbey lands to this day in possession of some of our nobility and gentry.*

Towards the end of his life, the king's temper became absolutely terrific. Scarcely any one but the good Cranmer, and Katherine, the queen, dared to approach him. His bodily infirmities tended to aggravate his fury, and the land became defiled with the innocent blood that he shed. Several thousands of people suffered death for their religion in this reign, and when we think of the names of sir Thomas

* One of his attendants was rewarded with some abbey lands for having wheeled his chair further from the fire, and a lady had a monastery given her for making him some puddings which he liked. Mrs. Markham's “History.”

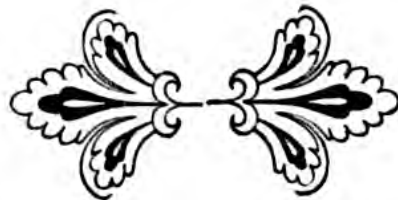
More, Dr. Fisher, Cromwell, the venerable countess of Salisbury, and the young and noble earl of Surrey, all executed without a shadow of justice, we cannot wonder that so guilty a conscience, since it brought him not true repentance, should have lashed him into the headlong fury of a wild beast. Let us stop here, dear children, it is too dreadful to think of such a death-bed as Henry's must have been. He died January 28, 1547, in the fifty-sixth year of his age, and the thirty-eighth of his reign, and was succeeded by his only son Edward the sixth.

I will now mention a few events of interest relating to this reign, which I was unable to introduce in their proper place. In 1542 was fought the celebrated battle of Solway Moss, in which James the fifth of Scotland was totally defeated by the English, and died broken-hearted in consequence, leaving a little daughter only a week old, who afterwards became the beautiful, but unhappy, Mary queen of Scots.

The philosopher Erasmus, lived in the reign of Henry the eighth, and taught Greek in the University of Oxford, till he was driven thence by the papists, who did not approve of people learning Greek, for fear, I suppose, of their reading the New Testament in the original language. Holbein the artist, many

of whose paintings are to be seen in this country, also lived at this time ; and Lilly, the grammarian, whose grammar was so much admired, that Cardinal Wolsey wrote a preface to it. The college of Christ Church, Oxford, was founded and endowed by Wolsey ; and he built, and furnished the palace at Hampton Court, and presented it to the king. Trinity College, Cambridge, was also founded, and learning of all kinds rapidly increased.

In the reign of Henry the eighth began the inhuman traffic of negroes for slaves, which continued for nearly three centuries, to the disgrace of the English name, but which the growing influence of the Gospel on the hearts of our rulers, has at length caused to be abolished for ever from our land, and may it, ere long, be driven by God's great mercy, everywhere from the face of the earth !





CHAPTER XXIV.

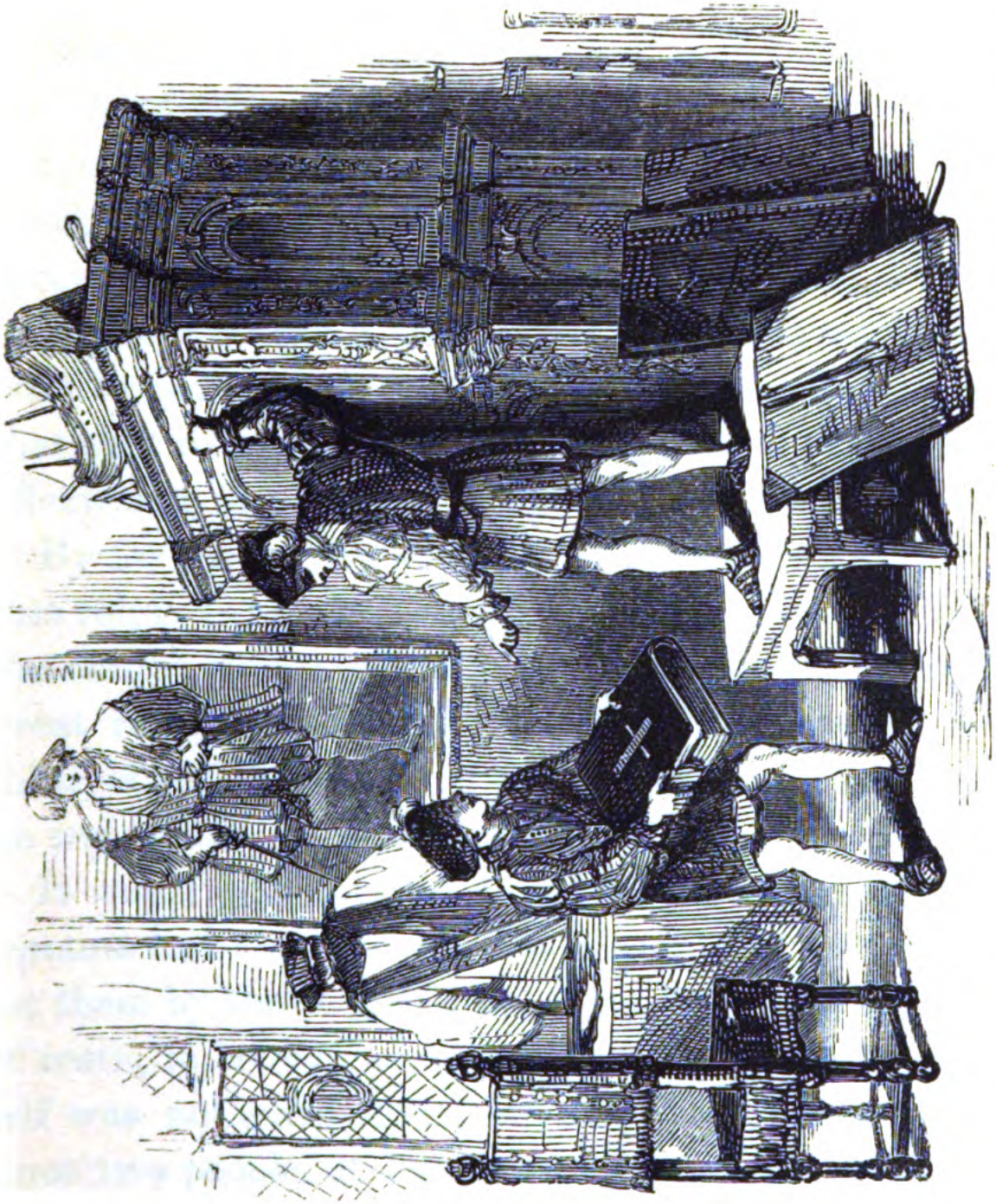
EDWARD THE SIXTH—FROM 1547 TO 1553.

EDWARD THE SIXTH was only nine years old when he came to the throne. His uncle, the duke of Somerset, brother to Jane Seymour, was appointed protector; an earnest encourager of the Reformation, and a prudent, sensible man. I told you that Edward, though so soon deprived of his mother's care, was not left without early training. God put it into the heart of his step-mother, Katherine Parr, to bring him up in the fear of the Lord; and in this important task she was guided by the advice of his godfather, the good Cranmer. His sister Elizabeth, who was about two years older than himself, used to learn her lessons with him, and they were taught Latin, Greek, Italian, and French. The princess Mary, who was brought up by her mother at first, and afterwards by her mother's friends, was a strict Romanist, and much avoided by Edward during his whole reign, because she not only persisted in having mass celebrated in her own

house, but refused to read any of the Protestant books he recommended to her.

He was a child of sweet, gentle disposition, and of much talent ;— some Latin letters and exercises of his are still to be seen, which show him to have been an attentive, industrious boy ; and, indeed, he well repaid the instructions he received by his early piety and devotion to the cause of the Reformation. A little anecdote is told of him as a child, that will please you. He was at play in a room with a young companion, when they wanted something off a shelf beyond their reach. Edward's friend, seeing a large Bible near, seized it, and was going to lay it on the floor to raise himself upon it ; but the young king took it from him, asking him how he could think of treating God's word with such irreverence. It is always pleasant to see children show a proper respect for every thing connected with religion ; and indeed we always find that those who most love God, and strive to live according to His holy will, are also the most careful of acting irreverently towards the places, books, and ministers consecrated to His service.

One of Somerset's first acts was to make arrangements for the completion of the Reformation, which Henry the eighth had left in a very unsettled state. A



Edward the Sixth reproving his friend for attempting to stand on the Bible.



number of good and learned men, with Cranmer and Ridley at their head, were appointed to draw up a prayer-book for the use of the church ; and after much of prayerful and serious consideration, they arranged the Liturgy, or Book of Common Prayer, nearly as we have it now. Archbishop Cranmer, too, wrote a part of what is still our Church Catechism ; that part which relates to the sacraments being added afterwards, in the reign of James the first.

By far the greater part of the nation conformed, in this reign, to the Protestant religion. The seizing of the church property and abbey lands continued, to the great regret of Cranmer, who was sorry to see any thing of selfishness mixed up in so good a cause ; but he was unable to prevent it.

It would be a comfort to us to know that the Protestants had not followed the example of persecution set them by the papists ; but I am sorry, for the sake of truth, to be obliged to say that even Cranmer himself was not quite free from this unchristian spirit ; since two people, at least, were burned by his orders, in defiance of the kind-hearted Edward's entreaties that their lives might be spared, and efforts made to bring them to the knowledge of the truth. So true is it that, in this world of sin, even the best of men are

liable to be carried away by evil example and the spirit of a corrupt age. But I have said so much about the Reformation in the last reign, and shall still have so much more to add respecting it in the two or three following, that for the present I must leave it, and pursue other subjects.

The late king had greatly desired a marriage to be contracted between Edward and Mary, the young queen of Scots. In order to bring this about, Somerset prepared a fleet, and a large army to march into Scotland and enforce it. The Scots doubtless thought this a strange way of seeking a wife, and answered that, "Though they liked the match, they liked not the manner of the wooing." They were defeated at Musselburgh, but still refused to give their queen to Edward; and to prevent any further dispute about the matter, sent her to France to be educated, and betrothed her to Francis, the eldest son of the king of France, who bears the title of the *dauphin*, as our heir is called the prince of Wales.

Disappointed in this aim, Somerset employed himself in making wise and useful laws for the good of the nation; but he was not long permitted to enjoy the high station he filled so well. His own brother, Seymour, the lord high admiral, was, I am grieved to

tell you, his bitterest enemy. How sad to see those whom God has given to be a comfort and support to each other by their affection become foes, and plot against the life and honour of their parents' children. "Behold how good and how pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Lord Seymour was determined to supplant his brother, and the enmity between them was increased by a very bad man, Dudley, earl of Warwick, who deceived both the brothers, in order to raise himself upon their ruin. He first led on lord Seymour to plot against his brother, and then persuaded Somerset to commit him to the Tower for high treason; for which he was shortly after tried, condemned, and executed.

Another cause tended to hasten the fall of Somerset. The destruction of the religious houses had, as I told you before, occasioned much misery to their inhabitants, driven out over the face of the country, without home or money. The poor whom they had assisted, too, being now left without means of support, were greatly dissatisfied, and many tumults and insurrections arose in consequence. Somerset was much disliked by the poor, who thought him one of the chief promoters of this disorder and calamity; for they could not then foresee how innumerable would be the

blessings brought upon the kingdom by the Reformation in the course of time. He had added to their displeasure by pulling down a church in the Strand, to make room for a magnificent palace for himself, still called Somerset-house. A number of persons, headed by Warwick, united against him, and made him so unhappy that he resigned the protectorship. Shortly after, he was imprisoned, heavily fined, and beheaded in 1551.

Edward's extreme youth (for he was then under fourteen,) makes it probable he was either not consulted in this sad affair, or that his wishes were overruled by his advisers. It would be grievous to think his consent could be willingly given to the execution of the uncle who had been so good a friend to him. But we have often had occasion to observe, in the course of this history, the tendency of high station and prosperity to harden the heart to the natural affections which have such free play, and so add to the happiness of families in the less exalted ranks of society. Do you think, dear children, any one could persuade you to let your uncle John, or William, or Henry's head be cut off? No; happily we live in better times; and there is not the slightest danger of your being tempted to such a fearful deed. Never-

theless, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Guard against giving way to angry passions, and let the spirit of love and gentleness be your guide in all your dealings with your relatives and friends ; yes, and even with those who may *not* be your friends, if such there be, for that is the way to turn their hearts ; as our blessed Saviour has taught us, both by word and by example. "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

Warwick was now placed at the head of affairs, and made duke of Northumberland. He still carried on the work of Reformation, but in a harsh and violent spirit, very different from that of the wise and prudent Somerset. He was a man of great ambition, and contrived a plan for making his son successor to the crown, if Edward should die without children. He began by persuading the young king that his two sisters, Mary and Elizabeth, were not entitled to reign. Edward did not care much about it, so far as Mary was concerned, because he dreaded the influence her bigoted adherence to Romanism would have on the country ; but he was sorry for his favourite sister Elizabeth, and held out for some time on her account.

But he was now in very delicate health, and com-

pletely in the power of the bold, unscrupulous Northumberland, and at length consented to leave the succession to his cousin, lady Jane Grey, granddaughter of Mary, the youngest sister of Henry the eighth.

There was some difficulty in getting the parliament to consent to this arrangement, and Cranmer, among others, vigorously opposed it, but at length yielded to Edward's earnest entreaties. Northumberland had brought about a marriage between his son, lord Guildford Dudley, and lady Jane Grey, and now thought his ambitious schemes accomplished. We shall see shortly how they were thwarted and punished.

This reign was too short to contain many events of importance. The thorough establishment of the reformed religion was its chief glory. Trade increased, and many ships were built. Wakefield and Leeds rose into notice and wealth for their woollen trade, which has continued to this day. The religious houses were not *all* given to noblemen and gentlemen as residences. Bethlehem Priory, for instance, was made into a hospital for insane people, and called Bedlam, in Moorfields. St. Thomas's Hospital was another built by Thomas à Becket, where his father's house stood. Christ's Hospital was also an old reli-

gious house, and was converted by Edward the sixth into a school, which still bears that name ; and the odd dress the boys wear is the same as that usual with children in those days. Pins were said to have been invented in this reign, though others attribute them to the time of Henry the eighth. While they were still uncommon, they formed a very acceptable present to ladies, and were given by their husbands when they first married. But sometimes an allowance of money was given instead, and hence comes the word *pin-money*, to express an allowance from a husband to his wife. Before the invention of pins, besides buttons, hooks and eyes, &c., ladies used to fasten their dresses with little wooden skewers. To this day, I am told, the old women in Wales and Cornwall use a long thorn, with a hook or knob at the end, to pin their cloaks with. What they did for needles I cannot think ; for they were not invented till Mary's reign, and even then were very uncommon ; so that any woman who possessed a needle was considered very fortunate indeed. Yet long before this, ladies passed most of their time in embroidering ; and even in the Bible, you know, we read of hangings of embroidery in the tabernacle in the wilderness, and in Ps. xlv. 14. we find mention

made of "raiment of needlework:" I suppose they must have had a kind of bodkin to work with. Sizergh Hall, in Westmoreland, contains some beautiful specimens of Katherine Parr's embroidery, and Katherine of Arragon was equally skilful with her needle, or rather bodkin. Henry the fifth, when prince of Wales, had a blue satin dress worked all over with eylet-holes, and from each hole hung the *needle* it was worked with ; which proves they must have been something different from the sharp needles of our days, as it would have been impossible to wear such dangerous ornaments.

But to return to Edward. From the time of Northumberland's regency the young king's health began to decline ; indeed, many people thought that the duke used unfair means to get him out of the way of his son's advancement. But we may well believe his illness to have proceeded from natural causes, without suspecting this bad man of being worse than he really was. However, he sent away all the king's physicians, and put him under the care of an ignorant old woman. After this, Edward's decline hastened rapidly, and he died at Greenwich, the 6th of July, 1553, in the sixteenth year of his age, and the seventh of his reign. His last words

were, "O my Lord God, defend this realm from papistry, and maintain Thy true religion, that my people may praise Thy holy name, for Jesus Christ's sake." It is impossible to think of this good young king without an affectionate interest. In addition to his earnest love of God, and humble desire to bring the blessings of true religion upon his country, he was unusually well informed for the time he lived in. A foreign physician, who practised in England, wrote of Edward, "He knew Latin and French well, was not ignorant of Greek, Italian, and Spanish, and had, besides, a knowledge of logic (the science of reasoning), physic, and music. I do not speak with exaggeration, but rather under the truth." His early death removed him from much temptation and sorrow, and opened a way for perfecting the Reformation by the blood of the martyrs, as we shall find in the reign of Mary.

Northumberland concealed the death of the king for two days, which time he employed in making arrangements to have lady Jane Grey proclaimed queen. Never was any one more unwilling to accept the honour. She was one of the most beautiful, and at the same time, pious, gentle, and learned of the ladies of England. She entreated the stern duke to

allow her to remain in her retirement, and represented to him the superior right of the princess Mary to the crown. But Northumberland was not to be turned from his project. On the other hand, however much the nation might dread from Mary's popery, the pride and ambition of the duke were still more feared.

Consequently, thousands of armed followers flocked around Mary, who was soon brought to London, and received the submission of the nobility. Northumberland gave himself up, and was committed to the Tower, as were the gentle lady Jane Grey, and her young husband, lord Guildford Dudley ; and in ten days from the time of her brother's death, Mary found herself in peaceable possession of the throne. Thus did Northumberland's unjust schemes fall upon his own head, and prove the ruin of those for whom he plotted.





CHAPTER XXV.

MARY—FROM 1553 TO 1558.

No one could have thought, from the first steps of Mary's reign, how merciless her conduct would become. She set free the old duke of Norfolk, who had been left in prison ever since Henry's time ; and Courtenay, son of the marquis of Exeter, who had also been many years in confinement without even a shadow of an accusation against him, and who afterwards became one of the most accomplished gentlemen of the English court. The papist bishops, Gardiner, Tunstal,* and Bonner, who had been imprisoned in Edward's reign, partly for refusing to join the Pro-

* Bishop Tunstal was uncle to the celebrated Bernard Gilpin, who was so good a clergyman that he was called "the apostle of the North ;" and, although a Protestant, was almost as much beloved and revered by the Romanists, as by the Reformers. Tunstal was a papist, but a pious, and meek spirited man, who held in abhorrence the system of persecution at that time pursued, and very often protected the Protestants from death and torture. Even the good Bernard Gilpin narrowly escaped suffering for his faith. Bonner had ordered him to be brought to London from his living at Houghton-le-Spring, in Durham, to undergo an examination

testants, and partly for political offences, were liberated, and taken into the queen's confidence. She also published a general pardon to those who had been engaged in the attempt to place lady Jane Grey on the throne: Northumberland himself was not however included in the pardon. He and some of his family were tried and executed; and lady Jane, and her husband, lord Guildford Dudley, were included in the same sentence, but not at that time executed, on account of their extreme youth, and by Mary's own earnest intercession in their favour. Soon, however, began the persecutions of this reign, which have left so deep a stain upon her memory, and now was the constancy of the reformers to be tried. The three Romanist bishops were replaced in their sees, and

at a distance from the flock who so loved him. When the officers entered his house to arrest him, he mildly said that he doubted not all things were ordered for the best, and would work together for good to him. On his journey he accidentally broke his leg, and while suffering great pain from it, one of these officers asked him tauntingly, if this two were for his good. "I doubt it not," replied the holy man. And so it proved; for, before his leg was well enough to allow of his proceeding, Mary died, and he was thus delivered from his great peril.

HONE'S "Lives of Eminent Christians."

the Protestants who had filled them under Edward, were cast into prison.

Holgate, of York ; Coverdale, of Exeter ; Ridley, of London ; and Hooper, of Gloucester, were first imprisoned as *heretics* (that is, as holding a wrong faith) ; then the venerable Latimer, and the gentle, timid Cranmer, were sent to the Tower. "Smithfield has long groaned for me," said Latimer, as he was taken through it. For in those days Smithfield, besides its present peaceful occupation as a cattle-market, was the place where those terrible burnings of religious men and women were held, to which we look back with mingled horror and admiration.

It soon appeared that Mary was bent upon restoring the Romanist religion in England ; and many insincere people, who had joined the Protestants in the preceding reign, only because *it was the fashion*, or from other unworthy motives, now turned round, and professed themselves papists once more. The queen sent a message of submission and reconciliation to the Pope, and the nation began to be alarmed, and to turn with anxious eyes to the Protestant princess Elizabeth. It had long been thought that Elizabeth herself had no part in the plots laid to place her on her sister's throne ; but of late years, letters and

papers have been brought to light, which prove that, unmindful of Mary's former kindness to her, she at any rate permitted, even if she did not actually engage in them.

At length Mary thought of securing her throne by marriage ; but the choice she made was one so displeasing to the nation, that tumults were raised in every direction to oppose it. Philip of Spain, son of the emperor, Charles the fifth, was the person she fixed upon ; a cold, gloomy, bigoted papist, without one redeeming quality. The queen obstinately persisted in her choice, even against the advice of bishop Gardiner, her chief counsellor.

A rebellion took place, headed by Sir Thomas Wyatt, with the avowed purpose of dethroning Mary, and crowning Elizabeth ; but it was put down, and Wyatt beheaded ; and what was sadder still, the innocent lady Jane Grey and her husband were also beheaded, through the determined malice of Gardiner, who would not let Mary rest until he had wrung from her the order for their execution. Oh, how can kings and queens hope for peace, when innocent blood is spilt, and crieth from the ground to heaven for vengeance ! (Gen. iv. 10.)

The dreaded marriage took place, and then began in

earnest the terrors of persecution. Philip was a man without a gleam of mercy in his heart. The queen gave up to him all the royal power, and became excessively attached to him, though, from the first, he treated her with coldness and neglect.

The Protestants soon groaned beneath the merciless hand of the tyrant. Gardiner and Bonner were ever ready to meet his wishes, and the flames of martyrdom burned with a fierceness never equalled but by his persecutions afterwards in his own dominions of the Netherlands.

A commission, at the head of which was Gardiner, was appointed for the examination of Protestants. The first who suffered was Rogers, a prebendary of St. Paul's, who had a wife and ten children, whom he was not even allowed to see; he was burnt at Smithfield. Afterwards, Hooper bishop of Gloucester, where he was burnt; and, either through cruelty or negligence, the wood was so green, that for three-quarters of an hour was this holy man tortured before he was released by death from his sufferings. When he was tied to the stake,* and the faggots piled around him, the queen's pardon was

* Mrs. Markham's "History of England."

placed on a stool before him ; and if he would have recanted, he might have stretched out his hand and taken it ; but he rejected it on such a condition, and died without uttering a groan.

I will not, more than is necessary, dwell on these dreadful scenes, my dear children, which must be as shocking to you to read as it is to me to have to relate them. There was, indeed, a "noble army of martyrs" sent to swell the hosts of heaven, but I will confine myself to an account of the execution of the three best known fathers of the Reformation, Ridley, Latimer, and Cranmer. Ridley and Latimer were condemned to be burnt at Oxford. There they were tied to a stake near Baliol College, with a bag of gunpowder fastened to each to shorten their sufferings. While the faggots were being kindled, Ridley addressed some words of pious consolation to Latimer, who, bold and resolute, "strong in the power of the Lord," needed them not, but answered, "Fear not, good brother, but be of good cheer. We shall this day kindle such a torch in England, as I trust in God shall never be extinguished."

Scarcely had he spoken, when the gunpowder caught fire, and the martyr was blown to atoms. Ridley suffered longer, but with perfect composure. "The

everlasting arms were beneath him," and after a short passage of extreme agony through "the valley of the shadow of death," we may hope he found rest and peace to his soul, and laid the crown of martyrdom at his Saviour's feet.

At this time the death of the cruel Gardiner also took place, and under very remarkable circumstances. So violent was his feeling against Latimer and Ridley, that, on the day on which these two venerable bishops were executed, he made a vow that he would not dine until a messenger should tell him that fire was set to the faggots with which they were to be burnt. The man's arrival was delayed; still Gardiner would not break his vow, but kept the old duke of Norfolk, who was his guest, waiting from eleven (the usual dinner-hour at that time) till three o'clock. But when at length the messenger did arrive and dinner was served up, Gardiner did not partake of it; for he was suddenly taken ill and carried to his bed, from which he never rose again.* It makes one shudder to think of this blood-thirsty man thus "falling into the hands of the living God," with all his unrepented crimes upon his head, and this last horrid oath yet upon his lips. "He shall have judgment without mercy that hath

* Mrs. Markham.

shewed no mercy." (Jas. ii. 13.) Dear children, never suffer yourselves to forget that our Lord said, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

The next on the list of martyrs was Cranmer. You know, I told you elsewhere, that, with all his real piety, he had a timidity of character which sometimes betrayed him into weaknesses, and caused him much regret. So it was in this case. It appears that he had a great dread of death, and that his enemies worked upon this fear; promising him life on condition that he would *recant*, or declare that he did not believe in the truth of the reformed religion, which he had for so many years been labouring to establish; and I am sorry to say his fears made him comply. It is very sad to read of the errors of good men; but they give us a lesson of humility, showing how weak and utterly unable of themselves to stand are even the very best. But "the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and He delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand." (Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24.) Scarcely had Cranmer thus yielded to his terrors when repentance arose in his heart. With prayers for pardon, and many tears, he mourned over his fault, and publicly asserted his faith in the Protestant

doctrines. He was led to the stake at Oxford, and when the faggots caught fire, he held in the flame his right hand, with which he had signed the recantation, till it was quite consumed, saying, "This hand hath offended." Then, with a serene countenance, he awaited the moment when the fire had completed its work, and his soul, cleansed from sin and from every human infirmity in the blood of his Redeemer, rejoined the glorified friends and fellow-labourers who had gone before him.

It has been said that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church;" and surely many who were wavering or fearful must have taken courage as they witnessed such scenes as these; beholding the cheerful countenances and unshaken faith of those who bore the most agonizing torments, counting it honour to suffer for the truth. The seed sown at Smithfield, and at Oxford, fell on good ground, and has sprung up and borne fruit a thousandfold. O may the noble tree which has risen from it go on putting forth its branches and leaves, until, like the vine of Israel, "the hills are covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof are like the goodly cedar-trees, and she send out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river." (Ps. lxxx.)

Before leaving this painful subject, I wish to say a few words on the character of queen Mary, as connected with these frightful persecutions. Revolting as it is to *our* feelings to think of putting people to death for worshipping God according to their conscience, it had been the universal law, wherever Christianity was professed, for upwards of a century, to burn heretics. Mary, therefore, having always been brought up to consider this right, should not be so severely blamed for these executions as if she had lived in more enlightened times. Making every allowance for her, enough still remains to show the persecuting spirit of Rome, "drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus," whose faith she professed, and a morose temper, aggravated perhaps by the unhappiness she had felt from her very childhood. Her father was always harsh towards her, from the time of his separation from her mother. From that mother she was forcibly taken, and never again allowed to see her; and from Philip, her husband, she never received the slightest mark of affection. One of the early reformers, named John Bradford, once remarked, when he saw a criminal going to be hanged at Tyburn, "There goes John Bradford, but for the grace of God." Let us

bear this little story in mind, and not be hasty to judge others severely, without taking into account how great their temptations may have been, or how slight their means of better knowledge.

Little else of consequence happened in Mary's reign, but the taking of Calais from the English, after we had held possession of it for two hundred years. This so much grieved the queen that she used to say, when she died, the word *Calais* would be found engraven on her heart. May the "Lord of all power and might, the Author and Giver of all good things, graft in *our* hearts the love of His name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and of His great mercy keep us in the same, through Jesus Christ, our blessed Lord and Saviour!"

After an illness of several months, Mary died, November 17, 1558, in the forty-third year of her age, having reigned about five years and a half.





CHAPTER XXVI.

ELIZABETH—FROM 1558 TO 1603.

ELIZABETH'S accession to the crown gave universal satisfaction. She was known to be an encourager of the reformed faith, and it was a great comfort to the Protestants to feel that they might now breathe freely, after the terror they had endured in the preceding reign. Elizabeth, who had been trained from her childhood to the most perfect self-command, graciously received all who approached her, not even excepting the Romanist bishops. To Bonner alone she refused her countenance, for the horrible barbarity he had shown in torturing the Protestants; and after a time he was committed to prison for denying the queen's supremacy, and remained there the rest of his life.

The first step of Elizabeth was to establish firmly the reformed religion. All the laws against it were repealed, and others made, which placed it upon the basis on which it now stands. I am very glad to tell

you that there was not a drop of blood shed in this reign for religious opinions.

The queen chose men of great integrity and talent to be her counsellors, among whom Cecil, lord Burleigh, and lord Walsingham, stand first. She had the good sense to value such friends, and to keep them always attached to her. Her public measures were invariably marked with vigour, and a desire to secure the real welfare of her country ; but it is to be regretted that her private conduct was sometimes sullied by weaknesses we could not have expected from a queen who displayed so much of wisdom and firmness in her rule. For instance, she would suffer herself too often to be guided by favourites unworthy of her friendship, and chosen rather for their wit, grace of manner, and amusing powers of conversation, than for any moral worth or ability.

Her greatest favourite, while he lived, was Dudley, earl of Leicester, a heartless, unprincipled man, but of pleasing appearance and manners. He was a son of that duke of Northumberland who was beheaded in Mary's reign, and deceived the queen to secure his own advancement. Ratcliffe, earl of Sussex, stood next in her favour, of which he was much more worthy than Leicester ; being an honest though rough

and plain-spoken soldier, sincerely attached to his queen, and faithful in his service to her. Elizabeth had discernment enough to value such a servant, and always employed him in important affairs, while she generally kept Dudley at court, to provide her with amusement. The followers of these two gentlemen caused her much trouble by their frequent quarrels ; yet she encouraged them, because it gave her more power over their masters.

The English wished their queen to marry, and many foreign princes eagerly sought such an alliance ; but she always declared her intention of remaining unmarried, while, at the same time, she persisted in refusing to name her successor, and was very angry when the subject was named to her. In case of her dying without children, Mary, queen of Scotland, who was grand-niece to Henry the eighth, was the next heir to the English crown, and this became one of the causes of that jealousy which afterwards led to a great stain on Elizabeth's character, the execution of that beautiful, but imprudent and unhappy queen.

You will remember Henry greatly desired that a marriage should take place between her and his only son, Edward the sixth, and that the Scots, not choosing to consent to it, betrothed her, while yet a

child, to the dauphin, or eldest son of the king of France. Shortly after their marriage the king died, and Mary's husband became Francis the second ; and immediately taking advantage of an expression in Henry's will, they declared that Elizabeth had no right to the crown, and styled themselves, much to her annoyance, king and queen of England. Francis died early, and Mary, who had hitherto passed her life in the French court, was obliged to return to Scotland, where the rude and savage manners of the Scots frightened and disgusted her, while they were equally shocked by her levity and freedom. In addition to this, she had been brought up a strict Romanist, while the Scots had very generally adopted the Protestant doctrines, but with a stern and rigid spirit, as far from the mild tone of the Gospel as was the persecuting spirit of popery under the English Mary. We have no occasion to enter into the history of Mary queen of Scots, except so far as it was connected with that of Elizabeth. Her imprudent conduct soon involved her in quarrels with her subjects, by whom, after a long struggle, she was deposed, and her son James crowned, by the title of James the sixth, and Mary's half-brother, Murray, appointed regent, as the king was but an infant.

Driven from her own country, Mary sought refuge in England, but Elizabeth ungenerously imprisoned her, and kept her in confinement nineteen years. The Romanist party, both in England and Scotland, made many efforts to release her, and Elizabeth was kept in constant anxiety lest they should succeed, and place the captive queen on the English throne.

These conspiracies, with the dread of the restoration of popery in England, which would have been the probable result of their success, made Elizabeth's ministers very earnest in persuading her to consent to Mary's execution ; a most unjust and cruel measure, but the very natural consequence of her first wrong step, in detaining the queen of Scots as a prisoner. After long refusing her consent, Elizabeth at length signed the death-warrant of her cousin, who was beheaded at Fotheringay Castle, Northamptonshire, February 6, 1587, a lamentable error, and a sad stain upon a reign marked with so much of wisdom and prosperity as this.

The next circumstance I have to relate to you is the coming of the Spanish Armada. Philip, king of Spain, the husband of the late queen Mary of England, was, as I have before told you, a most cruel and bigoted papist. His persecutions of the Protestants

in the Netherlands, of which country he was also king, are terrible to read of, and he was bent upon re-establishing the Roman Catholic religion in England. For this purpose he tried to persuade Elizabeth to marry him ; but she refused. Then he strove, by every means in his power, to induce her to join him in fighting against his Dutch Protestant subjects. But he soon found that Elizabeth was far more inclined to assist them than him ; and he displayed his resentment by immediately declaring war against England, and preparing to carry it out with such an enormous force as would have been sufficient to vanquish the whole nation, if battles were always to the strong, and not rather determined by One who can make an armed host to fly before a child.

In 1588 Philip had completed his preparations. His fleet was composed of many more ships than the English could muster, and of a size greatly surpassing any that had hitherto been seen. They were commanded by the duke of Medina Sidonia, and the land forces, amounting to 50,000, by the duke of Parma. So certain of conquest did Philip feel, that he called this great fleet and army the Invincible Armada, and actually had chains on board for the prisoners he expected to take. But “ let not him that girdeth on his

harness boast himself as he that putteth it off," said the king of Israel.

Overwhelming as was the force collected against the English, they were in nowise dismayed. Elizabeth, who was as brave as a lion, made the most prudent preparations to receive her enemy. Her fleet was small, but commanded by men of tried skill and valour. Lord Howard of Effingham was the leader, and under him were admirals Drake, Hawkins, and Frobisher, all men of renown in the naval history of England. The land forces, also very inferior in number to Philip's, were divided into several bodies, and stationed at those places where the Spaniards were most likely to land. One, under lord Hunsdon, guarded the queen's person ; another, commanded by lord Leicester, was stationed at Tilbury Fort, and the rest were distributed as prudence directed. Elizabeth omitted nothing that could strengthen her position and give courage to her people, who, on their side, gloried in their courageous queen, and greeted her with shouts wherever she appeared. At Tilbury she rode through the ranks, encouraging and animating the soldiers by her words and example. She said to them, "I know I have but the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart of a king, and of a

king of England too, and think foul scorn that Parma, or Spain, or any prince of Europe, should dare to invade the borders of my realms ; to which, rather than any dishonour shall grow by me, I myself will take up arms : I myself will be your general, judge, and rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field." Lastly, remembering from whom kings have their authority, and armies their strength, the English commended their just cause unto the Lord of Hosts, and calmly awaited the hour of action.

On the 29th May, 1588, the Spanish fleet left the Tagus, but on the very next day a violent storm so disabled the ships that they were compelled to return in order to refit. Then again it sailed with orders to make at once for Flanders, there to take the duke of Parma and the land forces on board ; but hearing on the way that the English fleet was at Plymouth, the Spanish admiral disobeyed, and directed his course thither, in the hope of crushing the British power at one blow. Lord Howard was informed of the approach of the Spaniards in time to get out of port, when he beheld the armada coming towards him in the form of a giant crescent.

He soon found that the immense size of the Spanish ships was an advantage to his lighter vessels, as he

could sail faster and make every shot tell on their huge sides, while the Spaniards fired over the English ships and did them no harm. Sir Francis Drake took two of the largest, and then the Spanish fleet sailed slowly up the Channel to Calais, where they hoped to be joined by the duke of Parma. Lord Howard followed, and sent eight fire-ships among them as they lay at anchor, and so forced them to disperse in every direction. In this confusion the English succeeded in taking twelve of their ships. Parma, seeing how badly the fleet fared, refused to let his army embark, and Medina Sidonia, finding he was getting the worst of it, thought it advisable to turn homewards. But a contrary wind obliged him to make the circuit of Scotland, pursued by the English fleet, which took possession of the stragglers, and might have done them still more mischief had not their ammunition fallen short. The tempestuous weather completed their ruin. Many of the Spanish vessels were wrecked on the coasts of Scotland and Ireland, and but few ever reached again the country they had left so full of pride.

Very grateful were Elizabeth and her subjects for this merciful interposition of Providence in their favour. The queen went in state to St. Paul's, to

return thanks to Almighty God, and medals were struck in commemoration of so great a national deliverance, representing a fleet beaten by a tempest and falling foul of each other, with this inscription in Latin, "He blew with His winds, and they were scattered."

After this, Philip attempted no more to invade England, but the English admirals often attacked the Spanish dominions, and one of them, lord Essex, took Cadiz, a most important city. Sir Walter Raleigh, another of the queen's admirals, was an excellent soldier as well as sailor, and an accomplished man. He made many voyages to foreign countries, and particularly to America ; from whence, in the following reign, he brought a gift to England, which has been ever since so useful to us all, that I often wonder what people who lived before his time did without it. This gift was the POTATO ! Now, the next time you dine, try to remember that you owe this wholesome and pleasant vegetable to the great and renowned sir Walter Raleigh. He also introduced another vegetable production, not quite so agreeable, according to Aunt Anne's opinion. He brought tobacco from Virginia, and smoking became a very fashionable indulgence immediately.

It will amuse you a little to hear how sir Walter Raleigh obtained the queen's favour. He was a very young man, of good family, but not very rich, and was desirous to improve his fortune by attaching himself to Elizabeth's service, but did not feel sure of the kindness of her disposition towards him. One day, when she was walking down to the Thames to go on board her pleasure-boat, she came to a very muddy place, and knew not how to pass it, when sir Walter promptly took off his cloak and threw it down for her to walk upon ; a species of homage particularly agreeable to Elizabeth, who afterwards showed that she had not forgotten it. On another occasion, sir Walter wrote with a diamond, on the window of a gallery through which she must pass,

“ Fain would I climb, but fear to fall.”

And when the queen saw it, she wrote under it,

“ If thou dost fear, climb not at all.”

On this hint sir Walter acted, and rose deservedly high in the favour of his royal mistress.

Sir Philip Sidney was another celebrated character in this reign. Besides being a brave soldier, he was a most elegant, learned, and accomplished man, and as good and humane as he was brave. In an expedition

into the Netherlands, against the Spaniards, he was mortally wounded at the siege of Zutphen, and while lying on the ground, parched with an agony of thirst from his pain, he saw a poor wounded soldier lying near him look wishfully at the water some one was bringing him : “ Give him this water,” said the kind-hearted sir Philip, “ for his necessity is greater than mine.” How noble of him to remember, in such extreme suffering, the golden rule of “ doing unto others as we would they should do unto us !” Doubtless he had his reward.

Queen Elizabeth’s chief favourite, after the death of Leicester, in 1588, was the earl of Essex, a young man of ardent, generous disposition, but of fiery temper, which sometimes made him forget the respect due to a lady and a queen ; and it must be confessed that her conduct to him was not very ladylike, for she actually boxed his ears one day when he had offended her ; when, laying his hand upon his sword, he declared he would not submit to such an affront, and left the court. The queen, however, soon received him back into favour, and after the death of her wise old counsellor, lord Burleigh, who used to warn her of the consequences of her regard for this hot-headed young man, she appointed Essex lord-lieutenant of Ireland, a

very difficult and dangerous post in those days, when the Irish were little better than savages, and continually in a state of insurrection. Essex was by no means prudent enough for such a situation. He was always at war with the natives, and disobeyed almost all the orders of the queen, who at length wrote him an angry letter, cautioning him to act more prudently, and desiring him to remain in Ireland until she gave him permission to return. Instead of obeying, Essex immediately set out for England, and reached London before it was known he had left Ireland. Then, splashed with mud, and overheated, he rushed into the presence-chamber, and not finding Elizabeth there, he actually entered her dressing-room, where she was sitting with her hair all hanging about her face, and dressing. In her surprise she at first received him kindly ; but when she had time to reflect, she saw how ill he had behaved, and on his next appearance in her presence, ordered him into custody. Then, from the agitation of his mind, he became ill, and the queen, softened by his distress, sent him her own physician, with a kind and cheering message.

Essex recovered, and Elizabeth permitted him to live in his own house, in a kind of honourable imprisonment, and in strict retirement. After a time, she

was obliged to listen to the advice of her counsellors, and suffer him to be brought to trial for his mismanagement of Ireland. At first he submitted in a proper spirit, and sent many contrite messages to the queen, who was much pleased with him. But on her refusing to restore to him some pecuniary grants he had formerly enjoyed, his temper so completely got the better of him that he seemed like a madman. He entered into a conspiracy against the queen, who had been only too indulgent to him, tried to excite the mob to insult her, and behaved so disgracefully that he was imprisoned in the Tower. He was soon after tried for treason, and condemned to die ; and then the queen, mindful of her former regard for this imprudent young man, was so unhappy, that she did nothing but sigh and weep after signing his death-warrant.

Some time before this, fearing that his passionate temper would some day or other bring him into trouble, she had given him a ring, promising that whenever he should send it to her, she would give him a favourable hearing ; and now she fully expected to receive it. But the time wore on ; no ring came ; and much grieving at what she thought obstinacy and impenitence in one who had been to her as a son, she at length consented to his death.

About two years after Essex was beheaded, the countess of Nottingham, on her deathbed, begged the queen to come to her, as she had something to tell her. She then confessed that Essex had entrusted her with the ring to give to Elizabeth, but that her husband, the earl of Nottingham, who was his secret enemy, would not allow her to do so ; and now that she was dying, she implored the queen's pardon. I am sorry to say that Elizabeth refused her petition ; she even shook the dying woman by the shoulder, saying, " God may forgive you, but I never can." This was a very sad thing for a Christian to say, for our Lord has taught us that we must forgive others, or we cannot ourselves expect pardon from God. Elizabeth, although hasty in temper, was not revengeful, and her words, spoken in the first moment of anger, were probably soon regretted. She regained her room as quickly as she could, and throwing herself on the floor, gave herself up entirely to grief. For several days and nights she sat on the floor, supported by cushions, refusing to take the advice of her physicians, who pronounced her to be dying. At length, when she became too weak to resist, she was laid upon her bed, and the archbishop of Canterbury was sent for, and prayed beside her for many hours. To the last

she refused to name her successor, and about four o'clock in the morning of March 24, 1603, she died at Richmond, in the seventieth year of her age, and the forty-fifth of her prosperous reign.

Elizabeth was the last of the Tudors ; she was succeeded by her cousin, James the sixth of Scotland, son of the beautiful Mary Stuart, queen of Scots, and hence he is called the first of the Stuarts.

The benefits derived by the country from Elizabeth's rule were many and great ; although, as there is no unmingled good in this world, there was some blending of evil with them, as I shall have to show hereafter, when they sprang up to wilder growth in the reign of Charles the first. The Protestants who had fled the country in the reign of Mary, and returned in that of Elizabeth, brought with them a great many strange notions about religion ; and in their anxiety to avoid the errors of Romanism, fell into the opposite extreme, and wanted to have a religion entirely without forms and ceremonies. But in this they could not agree among themselves, and consequently a great many *sects* or parties arose, who disputed with each other, and caused much confusion in the church. The most rigid of these were called *Puritans*, because they tried to do away with *all* forms

and ceremonies, and to worship God in strict *purity*. Among other things, they thought it sinful for clergymen to wear surplices, and waged especial war against the square caps, such as are still worn by students in the universities, saying that these were a sinful remnant of popery !

It is always much to be lamented when those who are appointed as shepherds to God's people waste time and cause bitterness of feeling and disputes by thus dwelling on matters of no real importance, instead of preaching the Gospel in the spirit of the apostles. St. Paul says, in his epistle to Timothy, " Foolish and unlearned questions avoid, know that they do gender strifes, and *the servant of the Lord must not strive ; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves.*"

Queen Elizabeth, thinking that the hostility of the Puritans was directed quite as much against her authority as that of the church, constantly endeavoured to keep them down. Much of evil necessarily sprang out of the divided state of the church at this period ; but, as is always the case, the great and merciful God, who permits evil for his own wise purposes, overruled it to good eventually. From thinking so constantly about religion many people became really pious ; the

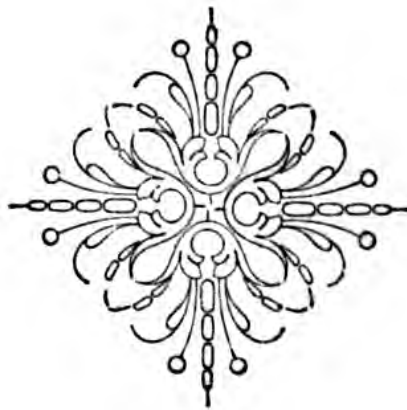
manners of the age improved, the Sabbath was more strictly observed, and the people in general became more serious and thoughtful. Much of this is undoubtedly to be attributed to the preaching and writings of the Puritans, which taught a purer and more spiritual doctrine than had been inculcated since the earlier ages of Christianity, before Romanism had reared her proud head so high, and corrupted the pure and simple faith of the Gospel.

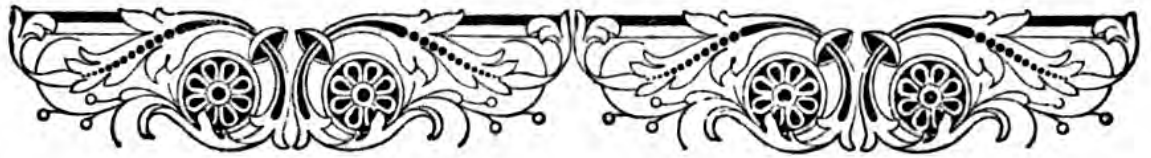
Many persons of eminence lived in this reign, among whom, Shakspeare, the greatest uninspired poet the world has ever produced, stands foremost. Edmund Spenser, the author of the "Fairy Queen," also lived and died. The East India Company was established, and sir Francis Drake made his celebrated voyage round the world.

Knitted stockings were invented in the reign of Elizabeth, before which time people used to wear them of cloth, laced or buttoned, so as to fit tightly. Watches became common in this reign, though they had been invented some time before. The oldest watch now existing is one which belonged to Robert Bruce, king of Scotland, who lived in the reign of our Edward the second.

Sir Thomas Gresham, called "the prince of English

merchants," built the Royal Exchange at his own expense, and conferred many other public benefits on the country. The navy was greatly improved, and the internal peace of the kingdom preserved throughout the reign of Elizabeth, which was productive of greater and more lasting prosperity to the nation than that of any sovereign since Alfred the Great; and it is for this reason that we are willing to lose the remembrance of her private failings in that of the wisdom and vigour of her government, and to talk of her familiarly as "the good queen Bess."





CHAPTER XXVII.

JAMES THE FIRST—FROM 1603 to 1625.

So well had Cecil, lord Salisbury, (son and successor of the celebrated lord Burleigh,) taken measures for the peaceable accession of James of Scotland to the English throne, that no opposition was made to it, and from this time the two countries have always been governed by the same sovereign. But James the first was never a popular king. He had not that frank cordiality of manner, and love of show and noise which had made the people so warmly attached to Elizabeth; and he much offended them by always speaking ill of the late queen, because, you know, she had caused his mother, Mary queen of Scots, to be put to death. It was then very natural that he should entertain different feelings towards her, but imprudent to express those feelings as he did.

The character of James was a strange mixture of sagacity and folly. So far as books were concerned, he was unusually learned, but had such an odd manner of showing off his knowledge, that people could not

help laughing at him. He had also a natural awkwardness and timidity which contrasted ill with Elizabeth's bravery ; and instead of being often amongst his subjects, and entering into their occupations and amusements, he liked better to avoid crowds and pageantry, and to shut himself up at Theobald's Park, Cheshunt, and amuse himself with field-sports. He also built a small house at Newmarket, and set on foot the races which are still held there annually.

In the first year of James's reign, a conspiracy was formed against him, for which no satisfactory reason has ever been given. Sir Walter Raleigh, lords Grey and Cobham, sir Griffin Markham, and one or two others of less note, attempted to dethrone him in favour of his cousin, lady Arabella Stuart, a beautiful and amiable young lady, who was not even aware of their wishes, and was very far from desiring the honour they designed her. It was soon discovered, and all the conspirators condemned to die ; but the sentence was not executed, though Grey, Cobham, and Markham were actually brought to the scaffold, and made to lay their heads on the block, before the king's pardon was announced to them. They might have said, like Agag, " Surely the bitterness of death is past." Sir Walter Raleigh was neither pardoned,

nor his sentence carried into effect, but he was kept a prisoner in the Tower thirteen years. We shall hear more of him in the course of this reign.

Poor lady Arabella was perhaps the most to be pitied of the party. So far from wishing to be a queen, she had privately married a gentleman named William Seymour, son of lord Beauchamp, and their only desire was to pass a quiet, domestic life in the country. But after this conspiracy, the anger and jealousy of James were excited against them, and they were both confined in separate prisons.

After a time both of them contrived an escape, and lady Arabella, who first reached the appointed place of meeting, embarked on board a French ship engaged to receive her. She wished much to wait for her husband, but the commander overruled this desire, and set sail without him. At length he too arrived, but the ship, with his wife on board, was gone. In despair he hired another vessel to land him in Flanders, and thus he escaped. But poor lady Arabella was overtaken in Calais roads by a king's ship, and brought back to England. She was again imprisoned in the house of sir John Conyers, at Highgate ; and here she passed the remainder of her short but suffering life. For a time she was buoyed up by her strong confi-

dence in her husband's affection, which, she thought, could not fail to contrive some plan for her release. But she was too well guarded ; and as time rolled on, and her hope expired, the poor lady's health and mind gave way together, and she died insane. We may learn from her sad fate how little real happiness is derived from splendour of station. Had this unhappy lady been born only one degree of lower rank, she might have passed a quiet and peaceful life with her beloved husband in the retirement she preferred ; and have made many happy by her aid, example, and instruction. "If in *this* world only she had hope, she was of all people most miserable." But we will trust that her sorrows drew her nearer to God, and that it was indeed "good for her that she was afflicted."

When James first came to the throne, he behaved more kindly to the papists than they had been of late accustomed to, and they began to hope that the penal laws against them would be repealed or done away with, and that they would have the same freedom of exercising their religion as the Protestants. Whether James ever intended this is not certain ; but his ministers and counsellors so much dreaded the increase of Romanism in the country, that he found himself obliged to appear more strict, and some of the laws

which inflicted heavy fines on papists were put in force. The consequence of this was the famous Gunpowder Plot, of which all my little friends must have heard. Nothing could be more atrocious than the horrid design of blowing up the houses of parliament, at the time when all the members were to be assembled, and the king, with his queen and eldest son, prince Henry, to be present. There is perhaps no ground for believing that the whole body of Roman Catholics in England were concerned in, or approved of it, although the desperate and wicked men who contrived so dreadful a plot hoped that their brethren would side with them if it came to a successful end. A few papists of ruined fortunes determined to overthrow the government at one blow. Robert Catesby, a Warwickshire gentleman, who had ruined himself by extravagance and dissipation, contrived to persuade a few others, as wild as himself, to join him in this attempt. The names of the principal conspirators were Catesby, Winter, Percy, Digby, and Tresham, with a soldier of determined courage and unscrupulous character, named Guy Fawkes, who was to set fire to the powder when the time arrived. They hired a house next to that where the parliament met ; and in the course of a few months contrived to dig a hole

through the wall into the cellar beneath the very place where all the members were to meet. Into this cellar they put thirty-six barrels of gunpowder, covered over with coals and faggots to conceal them. It was agreed that, immediately after the explosion, the whole party should meet at Dunchurch, in Warwickshire, where they had no doubt of being joined by a sufficient body of Roman Catholics to secure the accomplishment of their plans. How they could find it in their hearts to go on contriving and carrying out this monstrous design during the greatest part of a year, it is difficult to conceive. But one of the party at length felt something like compunction, and determined on trying to save one of the intended victims. Lord Monteagle received an anonymous letter, (that is, without any signature,) of which the following is a copy : “ My lord,—Out of the love I bear to some of your friends, I have a care of your preservation. Therefore I advise you, as you tender your life, to devise some excuse to shift off your attendance at this parliament ; for God and man have concurred to punish the wickedness of this time. And think not slightly of this *advertisement* (warning), but retire yourself into your country, where you may expect the event in safety. For though there is no appearance

of any stir, yet I say they will receive a terrible blow this parliament, and yet they shall not see who hurts them. This counsel is not to be *contemned*, (despised,) because it may do you good, and can do you no harm, for the danger is past as soon as you have burnt this letter. And I hope God will give you grace to make good use of it ; to whose holy protection I commend you."

Lord Monteagle was at dinner with some friends when this strange letter was given to him, and (as he well might be) was much puzzled what to make of it. At first he was inclined to think it was some silly trick to frighten him ; but at length took it to Cecil, the secretary of state. He, in his turn, laid it before the king, who at once pronounced that it had something to do with gunpowder ; a surmise suggested to him perhaps by the fate of his own father, lord Darnley, who met his death by that means. Upon the king's suggestion, the cellars under the parliament-house were examined, and the powder discovered ; but it was agreed that the discovery should be kept secret till the very day on which the members were to meet. About two o'clock in the morning of the 5th of November, Guy Fawkes went to see if all were safe ; and just as he had put the key in the lock, sir Thomas

Knyvet, at the head of a party of soldiers, ran forward and secured the conspirator. The rest of the party soon received tidings of the failure of their plot, and immediately set off to Dunchurch, where, under pretence of a hunting-party, Digby had collected a number of his friends and adherents.

All their thought now was to increase their numbers, and for this purpose they rode through the neighbouring counties ; but not a single Roman Catholic joined them, while the sheriffs pursued them from place to place. At length they resolved on making a bold stand in their own defence, and shut themselves up in a house at Holbeach, determined rather to die than yield. But here their wicked designs fell upon their own heads ; a quantity of gunpowder accidentally blew up, and many of them, among whom were Catesby and Percy, were killed, and others shockingly wounded. "He hath graven and digged up a pit, and is fallen himself into the destruction that he made for others. For his travail shall come upon his own head, and his wickedness shall fall on his own pate." (Ps. vii. 16, 17, P. B. version.) The rest of the leaders were taken and executed, as well as a priest named Garnet, who had been made acquainted with the design. Several Ro-

manist noblemen and gentlemen were heavily fined, on suspicion of being concerned in the plot. Many new and severe laws against the papists were passed, and a service of thanksgiving was appointed to be read annually in the churches on the 5th of November, a custom still kept up in many places.

I have mentioned prince Henry, the king's eldest son, as one of the intended victims of the Gunpowder Plot. You will like to know a little about him, who would have been king of England but for his early death. He was from his childhood the favourite of the nation for his true piety and great talent. When he was only seven years old, he wrote his father a very nice Latin letter, and after he grew up he corresponded with some of his friends in that language. He was all his life fond of study, and also very skilful in manly exercises, such as riding, fencing, &c. He was especially careful in the choice of his friends, which is always a great proof of good sense ; he never allowed any bad person to remain in his household ; and what was better than all, he "remembered his Creator in the days of his youth." It is no wonder, then, that the people of England dearly loved him, and thought with pleasure of the time when he should reign over them. But it pleased God to disappoint

this hope by taking him early to Himself. A fever, brought on by over-exertion, reduced his strength very much, and as he did not take sufficient care of himself, he was soon obliged to keep his bed. The ignorance of the physicians of that time completed what disease had begun, and the young prince died at Theobald's Park, in the eighteenth year of his age.

We must now return to our old friend sir Walter Raleigh, whom we left imprisoned in the Tower, for the share he had had in the conspiracy to place Arabella Stuart on the throne. During the thirteen years of his confinement he wrote some books, considered very learned at the time, but which the increase of knowledge has since shewn to be full of error and fiction. Among other things, he wrote of a discovery he had made of a very rich and fertile country in South America, on the banks of the Oronooko ; representing that this country, Guiana, abounded with gold sufficient to enrich the king and all his subjects. James read the book, and although he suspected it might be only a scheme of Raleigh's to get out of prison, he allowed him to command a squadron, and go to this beautiful country, in hopes of obtaining some of its riches ; but would not repeal the sentence of death

which hung over sir Walter's head. He was absent two years and found no gold, but unwisely attacked and destroyed a fort belonging to the Spaniards in South America, in which action his only son was killed ; and the king of Spain was so much offended, that he insisted on sir Walter being put to death. James was at this time trying to bring about a marriage between his son Charles and the infanta, or eldest daughter of the Spanish king ; and, to gain his end, basely complied with this demand. Sir Walter was beheaded, not for the offence against Spain, but under the sentence passed upon him fifteen years before ; an unjust and murderous proceeding, which will for ever disgrace James's name. After all, the marriage purchased by Raleigh's blood never took place. On some misunderstanding, which has not been explained, it was broken off, and Charles afterwards married Henrietta Maria, daughter of the king of France.

James had very little peace or comfort in the latter part of his reign. He was too fond of making favourites of people who had nothing to qualify them for the distinction, but a handsome person and forward manners, and who threw disgrace on him by their bad conduct. But he lavished upon these unworthy friends

money, titles, and honours, to the great indignation of the people. He was also very apt to think a king could do no wrong, and might act in defiance of the laws. He often tried to obtain money without the consent of parliament, and when he had it, gave it to his favourites, instead of employing it for the good of the country, which naturally produced a great deal of murmuring and discontent. But if he did some things that were very wrong and clearly against the interests of the kingdom, we are indebted to James for one very great and lasting benefit ;—the Bible had been translated into English in the reign of Edward the sixth by archbishop Cranmer ; but as his translation had been made from Latin copies, some parts of it were incorrect. James, therefore, employed a number of learned men to make a new translation from the original languages. The Old Testament having been written in Hebrew, the New in Greek. Fifty persons were engaged in this good work, which took four years to complete ; at the end of which time the English Bible appeared as we have it now, the pure and the precious Word of God to His people. Happy are they who, like Timothy, have “ from a child known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

The Church Catechism was completed in this reign, by the addition of that part relating to the Sacraments. Many other improvements of a more worldly character took place in the reign of James the first. Instead of encouraging war, as many preceding sovereigns had done, he studied to promote peace, and encouraged his subjects to make voyages of discovery to other lands. Thus trade was greatly increased, and a way opened in "the dark places of the earth," lying in heathenism and deadly ignorance, for the feet of those who afterwards went forth, armed with the Word of God, to carry to them the blessed tidings of salvation. James, very sensibly, discouraged the country gentlemen from coming to pass their time hanging about the court. They were thus induced to live on their estates, and promote the comfort, instruction, and welfare of their tenants and the surrounding poor ; and as none ever do good without, in some way or other, reaping good in return, there is perhaps no character or station in the world more honoured, or more highly privileged, than that of an English country gentleman.

“ The stately homes of England,
How beautiful they stand !
Amidst their tall, ancestral trees,
O'er all the pleasant land.

The deer across their greensward bound,
 Through shade and sunny gleam,
 And the swan glides past them with the sound
 Of some rejoicing stream.

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The free, fair homes of England!
 Long, long in hut and hall,
 May hearts of native proof be rear'd
 To guard each hallow'd wall!
 And green for ever be the groves,
 And bright the flowery sod,
 Where first the child's glad spirit loves
 Its country and its God!"—MRS. HEMANS.

Many great and celebrated men lived in this reign. Shakspeare was still living; Ben Jonson wrote; Camden, the antiquary, lived; and the lord chancellor Bacon, one of the greatest philosophers this country has ever produced. Sir Edward Coke, lord chief-justice of England, one of our best lawyers, also lived in the reign of James. And there was a great merchant, named Thomas Sutton, who was so immensely rich that James offered to make him a peer, on condition of his bequeathing his wealth to the prince of Wales, afterwards Charles the first. But the merchant knew the true use of riches, and determined on applying his to the glory of God. He established

the Charter House, and thus became a blessing to thousands then unborn.

The circulation of the blood was discovered in this reign by Dr. Harvey ; and it sounds strangely to us, now that the truth of the theory is so universally known, that at the time Dr. Harvey was everywhere laughed at for his opinions, and called "the Circulator," in ridicule. Telescopes were invented in James's time, and mulberry-trees first planted in England. Baronets also were first created. This period of our history is marked by the establishment of colonies in North America, and by the increased importance of the English settlements in India.

Much as James loved peace, in the latter part of his reign he was drawn into a war on behalf of his son-in-law, the king of Bohemia, against Spain and Austria : but a pestilence broke out among the soldiers, and so many of them died, that there were not enough left to fulfil the purposes of the expedition, and James was so grieved at the calamity, that he was seized with a tertian ague, and died March 27, 1625, in the fifty-ninth year of his age and the twenty-second of his reign.

It is a very difficult thing to do justice to the character of James the first, from its mingled goodness

and great weakness. The execution of sir Walter Raleigh, his too great exertion of the royal *prerogative* (privilege), independently of the consent of parliament, and his weak attachment to unworthy favourites, are decidedly faults of magnitude ; but, on the other hand, his love of peace, encouragement of learning, attention to the increase of commerce, and freedom from religious persecution, were virtues even in advance of the age he lived in ; and indeed, for Aunt Anne's part, when people talk of James as a foolish king, she is very much inclined to hold up his beautiful translation of the Bible before her eyes, and say she cannot see his folly with such a blessing to hide it.





CHAPTER XXVIII.

CHARLES THE FIRST—FROM 1625 TO 1649.

BEFORE we enter upon the reign of Charles the first, it will be well to look back a little, and trace the gradual increase of the evils which brought at length such terrible judgments upon our country. My young friends will remember that England is governed by what is called a free constitution ; that is, every class and order in the country is represented in parliament, and no law can be made without the consent of the reigning monarch and the houses of lords and commons. The lords are the aristocracy, or hereditary nobility, with the bishops, or spiritual peers, as they are called ; and the commons are the representatives of the people, all of whom, who rent a house of the value of ten pounds per annum, have a right to vote for a member of this house. If a measure originate, as it most frequently does, in the House of Commons, and, on putting it to the vote, it is found that the majority, or greater part of the members, are in its favour, then it passes on to the House of Lords, and is

there considered in the same way ; and if they too agree in its favour, the bill, having passed both houses, is taken to the reigning monarch, whether king or queen, and if approved, she (for I am supposing our present good and gracious queen) touches it with her sceptre and says, “ La reine le veut,—the queen wills it,”—and the bill then becomes the law of the land, and is called an act of parliament.

Thus, you see, no law can be passed, nor any tax imposed upon the country, without the consent of the queen, the lords, and the commons. But, in order that this may be faithfully done, the parliament must be *honest* ; that is, they must not be too much devoted to the monarch, and so pass any laws he or she may propose, whether good or bad for the nation ; and, on the other hand, they must not lean too much to the people, and, to please them, refuse the necessary supply of money for carrying on the government.

In the reign of Henry the eighth the parliament was very servile, making into a law every wicked wish of the king, and thus the country became stained with innocent blood, and the brutal will of the tyrant took the place of the equitable voice of the country. In his successor, Edward the sixth's time, the case might have been the same, but that the young king

was himself governed by true religion, and his advisers, the duke of Somerset, and archbishop Cranmer, were honestly desirous of promoting the Reformation, the only measure of importance carried out in this short reign, but a work sufficiently glorious to immortalize the name of Edward, and one, my dear children, for which we can never be sufficiently thankful.

With Mary the same servility of the parliament deluged the country with the blood of the martyrs ; and in Elizabeth's long and prosperous reign her will was supreme, although, from the wisdom of her measures, the evil was not felt ; and the people cheerfully obeyed every wish of a queen whom they saw truly desirous of promoting the solid welfare and glory of the nation, without stopping to consider whether this ready obedience to a good sovereign might not afterwards be turned to evil account in the hands of a bad one. So that you see, dear children, an English monarch may not even enact good laws for the country, unless it be done *constitutionally*, that is, according to the rules of the constitution, or government. Keep in mind that expression. An act is constitutional when it is done according to rule ; and unconstitutional, however good in itself, if done without attending to the voice of the parliament, or representatives of the

nation. There was nothing wrong in queen Elizabeth's wanting money to carry out the useful measures of her wise government, but she was acting unconstitutionally when she obtained it from her subjects on her own responsibility, without duly consulting the wishes of the people, through their representatives in parliament.

Now this way of making the sovereign's will supreme had been carried on so long that the monarchs began to think it was their just right, or *prerogative*; hence we find James the first proceeding on the same principle himself, and bringing up his son Charles to hold equally erroneous ideas of the royal prerogative; and this was the main cause of all the evils that followed. The people began to feel their power, and to use it still more unconstitutionally than their monarchs had done. In fact, with the increase of knowledge consequent on the invention of printing, and the glorious light shed throughout the country by the Reformation, people had formed habits of reading and thinking on all subjects; and in their newly-acquired freedom from the chains of Romish superstition, were something like spirited horses unharnessed and turned into a field; it was no easy matter to bridle them at all. They rushed for a time into

the opposite extreme, and determined neither to submit to their king's lawful authority, in temporal or worldly affairs, nor to the just control of their bishops in the church, but tried to do away with both monarchy and episcopacy. Now my dear children will remember that kings have their authority from God ; as St. Paul says, " Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God ; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God : and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." (Rom. xiii. 1, 2.) And how necessary it is to obey this precept, we are taught not only by the example of the apostles, but by that of our blessed Lord Himself, who, while on earth, paid tribute to Cæsar, and even acknowledged the authority of His heathen judge, Pilate.

I hope my young friends have read this explanation with attention, as it will enable them to understand how great were the miseries brought upon our country, when, for a time, God permitted our constitution to be overthrown, and our national church to be laid in the dust.

Charles the first was twenty-five years old when he came to the throne ; he was a man of cultivated mind,

refined taste, and sincere piety. Of the highest courage and warmest affections, he was yet wanting in decision of character, and suffered himself too often to be led by those dear to him, but who were, in moral worth and talent, inferior to himself. Of these evil counsellors, the chief was the duke of Buckingham, a gentleman whose handsome person and pleasing manners had recommended him equally to James the first and to Charles, but whose ambition, pride, and misconduct greatly displeased the nation. The queen, Henrietta Maria, daughter of the king of France, was dreaded by the people from being a Roman Catholic, and justly disliked as a proud, selfish woman, who often persuaded Charles to act in opposition to the wishes and interests of his subjects. James was much to blame to allow this marriage, which could not fail to be displeasing to the nation, so lately freed from the trammels of popery, and still smarting under the recollection of the blood-stained reign of Mary. The only thing to be said in his excuse is, that at that time there were not very many Protestant princesses to be met with, for the reformed faith had not then spread so widely as, by the blessing of God, it has in these happier days.

At the time of James's death, the nation was

engaged in a war against Spain and Austria on behalf of his son-in-law, the king of Bohemia. He had undertaken this war much against his own wish, but was urged to it by the parliament, so that they were bound to let the king have sufficient money to carry out the undertaking with honour to the country. But their very first act, on Charles's accession, was, to vote him a sum too small even for a time of peace. Charles, therefore, immediately dissolved this parliament and called another, which was but little more liberal, and moreover demanded the dismissal of his minister, the duke of Buckingham. Upon this, the second parliament was also dissolved; and, greatly pressed for money, the king tried to raise it on his own responsibility, as others had done before him, but which was, you know, unconstitutional, and made the people very angry.

Shortly after this, upon some quarrel between the duke of Buckingham and cardinal Richelieu, the French minister, Charles made war against France, intrusting the command of the army to the duke of Buckingham, who made a disgraceful failure, and returned to England for more troops. While at Portsmouth, superintending the preparations, he was assassinated by a puritan named Felton, a man of

melancholy and enthusiastic turn of mind, and probably deranged. He was taken immediately, tried, and executed.

Charles was obliged to summon a third parliament, but it was even more opposed to his wishes than the other two had been. The king did not shew a conciliatory spirit, and many disgraceful scenes of opposition and violence took place. The parliamentary members were bent on securing their own rights and privileges, and reducing the power of the crown—very necessary steps to be taken, but carried out in so fierce and insolent a spirit, that it is not to be wondered at, Charles was unwilling to grant their demands, when we remember that he had been educated in the opinion that kings are entitled to the most unbounded obedience. After the death of Buckingham, he took for his friends and counsellors, sir Thomas Wentworth, afterwards lord Strafford, and Laud, bishop of London, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury. Both were men of talent and integrity, but holding in extreme the same opinions as the king, they were perhaps two of the worst counsellors he could have chosen, and soon became as unpopular as Buckingham had been.

The parliament framed a bill, called the Petition of

Rights, among other grievances, declaring illegal all taxation imposed by the king alone, and insisting on a right called *habeas corpus*, by which act no one can be imprisoned without having the right to insist on an open hearing. This is a most valuable act. It is occasionally suspended, as lately in the Irish rebellion, in order that the lord lieutenant, or queen's representative, may seize any suspected person, and imprison him without previous trial. Of course, this is done only in cases of emergency.

Had the actions of the parliament been all of this character, no one could have blamed them ; but they still refused supplies to the king, and treated him with such insolence, that in a moment of irritation, he again dissolved the meeting, and reigned without a parliament for eleven years. You may suppose that such an unconstitutional proceeding as this, gave great offence, and increased the displeasure of the country. Charles had much reason to regret that he had, on more than one occasion, suffered himself to yield to temper ; “He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city.” (Prov. xvi. 32.) But indeed he received much provocation. When he had, by the insolence of those around him, been betrayed into a

hasty expression, they called him tyrannical ; and when his kind and generous heart led him to express regret, they said he was weak. But his necessities now became very great, so that he was obliged to borrow money of his courtiers and friends.

In the midst of this trouble in England, Charles became even more embroiled with his Scotch subjects. I have before mentioned that many persons, in their zeal against popery, had run into the other extreme, and wished to do away with all religious forms and ceremonies. Thus the accustomed service of the church had, in too many places, come to be performed in a slovenly and careless manner, from the neglect of the apostle Paul's plain and judicious precept, "Let all things be done decently and in order ;" and archbishop Laud, whose zeal for the church too often outran his discretion, was suspected of a desire to restore some of the popish ceremonies ; thus offending thousands who were already inclined to look with suspicion on Charles for his marriage with a Romanist princess. But the evil did not stop here. Counselling by this zealous, but imprudent friend, Charles endeavoured to force the Liturgy of the English church upon the people of Scotland, and to introduce episcopacy, or the government of the

church by bishops, as it is in England ; while the Scotch preferred Presbyterianism, and drew up a protestation, pledging themselves to resist all such innovation to the utmost. This protestation they called a Covenant, and in defence of it, took up arms under the earl of Argyle, seizing some of the king's castles, and fortifying the town of Leith.

Charles's merciful disposition rendered him very reluctant to make war against his own countrymen ; but his forbearance made them only the more determined. Want of money soon compelled him to disband his troops ; and he was obliged to make many concessions to the Scotch to induce them to return to their country in peace.

Meanwhile, the discontent in England greatly increased. Charles levied a tax, called ship-money, for the support and improvement of the navy, which was particularly opposed, especially by a gentleman named John Hampden.

When Charles gained his cause, this gentleman, with many others of the same opinions, prepared to leave the kingdom, despairing of ever again seeing the country properly governed. Oliver Cromwell, a friend of Hampden, was one of the intended emigrants ; but just as they were about to sail, Charles

forbade it by proclamation ; an ill-advised step for him, as both these gentlemen afterwards became leaders in the rebellion against him.

Lord Strafford had been appointed lord lieutenant of Ireland, and by his vigorous administration had much improved and quieted that turbulent country. After reigning eleven years without a parliament, the king's necessities compelled him to call one. But from the first he saw such a determination to thwart and oppose him, that he dissolved it after a session of three weeks. He was, however, forced to summon another to help him with the Scottish war, which had broken out afresh ; and in November 1640, a parliament met, which has since been called the Long Parliament. The proceedings of this seditious assembly are far too important to be contained in this chapter. I will, therefore, finish it with an account of a few persons and events which may properly be introduced here.

You will like to hear something of the queen of Bohemia, Charles's sister, on behalf of whose husband James the first had made war with Austria and Spain. Charles entered into a treaty of peace with both these countries, and the king of Bohemia afterwards

lost all his dominions, and took refuge in Holland with his family.

Three of their sons came over to England ; one of them took the popular side in politics ; the other two, Maurice and Rupert, fought in the king's army. Prince Rupert was a commander, celebrated for his great courage ; but too frequently lost by his imprudence what he had gained by his valour. He was the inventor of a kind of engraving, called mezzo-tinto. It is said that he was led to the discovery by observing the effect of some rust on the gun-barrel of one of his soldiers. Many of the most useful discoveries and inventions have been made by thus carefully observing the daily trifles which inattentive persons pass over without notice. It is well to cultivate a habit of observation and attention from childhood ; since from this habit are derived many pleasures, and a fund of useful information which can never be attained by the practice of reading alone, without reflecting on what passes before our eyes. None of these sons of the queen of Bohemia had any children ; but they had a sister named Sophia, who married the elector of Hanover, and became the mother of a son, who was afterwards our king George the first.

Charles the first had much taste for all the fine arts,

but especially for painting ; and induced a foreign artist to come from Antwerp and settle in England, many of whose beautiful paintings still adorn the houses of our nobility, and the royal palaces. This was Vandyke, whose portraits are celebrated for their grace and exquisite finish. Aunt Anne has seen one of this artist's portraits of Charles the first, which represents him as a man of very beautiful and intelligent countenance, but with that expression of melancholy which he bore from his youth, seeming to foreshadow the sorrows which marked his life, and which was, doubtless, increased by the ordeal of violent opposition he had to undergo throughout his reign. The earliest museum was made in the time of Charles, by his gardener, John Tradescant ; this collection of curiosities is still preserved in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford.

A dreadful massacre took place in Ireland in 1641. This was a plot formed by the Romish bishops and priests for clearing the island of every Protestant inhabitant, and seizing their estates ; taking advantage of a time when the attention of the English government was occupied by the dissensions at home. The popish population rose in a mass ;* men, women, and

* Horne's "Lives of Eminent Christians."

children raised their hands to execute the work of wanton destruction. Throughout the province of Ulster a general cry was heard ;—“ Spare neither woman nor child ; the English are meat for dogs ; let not one drop of English blood be left within the country !” It is computed that 154,000 victims fell in this province of Ulster. One Protestant habitation alone, in the county of Cavan, remained untouched by fire or sword for several weeks. It was the abode of bishop Bedell, whose holy life, benevolence, and charity touched even the stern and cruel hearts of that infuriate people ; and often did they declare that he should be the very last Englishman whom they should expel from their shores. At length he too was taken prisoner, but his persecutors promised to shew him mercy. And what do my dear children think they called *mercy* ? Why, they imprisoned this venerable old man, in the depth of winter, in a ruin in Lochwater, a lake near Kilmore, and suffered him, his two sons, and a friend who was with them, to nail together a few boards to protect them from the weather, and here they detained him for nearly a month. Surely “the tender mercies of the wicked are very cruel.” In this wretched place the bishop was kept from December 18, 1641, till January 7, 1642, when

he was released. But the hardships he had endured were greater than his infirm constitution, bending under the weight of years, could sustain, and he only survived his release one month, entering into the rest of his Lord in his seventy-third year.

Several discoveries and improvements were made in the unhappy reign of Charles the first. Barometers and thermometers were invented ; sawing-mills were first built ; and newspapers became general ; the first that was ever published was in the reign of queen Elizabeth, to announce to the country the defeat of the Spanish Armada. They were then called newsletters, and were about the size of a sheet of letter-paper. The Bahama Isles were discovered in this reign, and coffee was first brought to England.





CHAPTER XXIX.

THE REBELLION.

THE first step of importance taken by the new parliament was to impeach lord Strafford and archbishop Laud on a charge of high treason. That this impeachment, so far as Strafford was concerned, was instituted from motives of revenge rather than of justice, there is not a shadow of doubt. His government of Ireland had been marked by great wisdom. He had suppressed all attempts at rebellion there, and kept the army in the highest state of efficiency. Perhaps his policy may have been somewhat arbitrary ; but this was probably needful, from the generally seditious temper of the people. The truth is, that the greater part of the House of Commons were puritans, of which sect Strafford had also formerly been a member, and by leaving it, had deeply offended all the influential adherents of the party, and especially Pym, the leader of the commons, who said to him, several years before the time of which I am writing, " You are going to leave us, but I will never

leave you while your head is on your shoulders." A malignant and cruel threat, and quite contrary to the spirit of that pure and holy law which, as a puritan, he professed literally to obey, but which threat he too faithfully accomplished.

Strafford pleaded his own cause most successfully. Nothing could be proved against him affecting his life ; but his enemies were resolved on his destruction, and condemned him to be beheaded. Charles, who was well aware that Strafford's great offence, in the eyes of these people, was his faithful attachment to himself, would not sign his death-warrant, although the queen and other counsellors advised him to sacrifice his friend to the public outcry, Juxon, bishop of London, alone urging him not to act against his conscience. Even Strafford himself wrote a letter to the king, begging him only to consider his own interest, and assuring him that he was ready to die in his service. At last, after a long resistance, Charles was induced to consent ; but so abhorred the deed that he commissioned four lords to sign the warrant. Even then he implored them to take time, to consider, to have mercy. But they were inexorable ; and Strafford was executed on Tower Hill, May 12, 1641. On his way to the scaffold, he was allowed to stop beneath

the window of an apartment where archbishop Laud was confined, in order to receive his blessing ; but the venerable man was too much affected to be able to speak, and could only raise his hands through the iron bars, in silent prayer over the victim's head. The earl suffered with great calmness and piety ; but Charles never forgave himself for having consented to give him up to his enemies ; and afterwards, when he was himself unjustly sentenced, said that it was a righteous judgment upon him for Strafford's death.

The king soon found that he could do nothing with the parliament, and unhappily, while his mind was agitated by the trial of his friend, he had given his assent to a bill proposing that the parliament should not be dissolved, prorogued, or adjourned, without its own consent, a measure which completely fettered him for the future.

After this, some real grievances were redressed, and the king remained for some time quite passive, finding that resistance was vain. Then he went to Scotland, to try to pacify the discontented there ; and while thus employed, the rebellion in Ireland broke out, which I have more fully described in the last chapter. The parliament voted money and ammunition for the suppression of this rebellion, and then kept the sup-

plies in their own hands, in order to turn them against the king.

The country was divided into many parties. There were the royalists, who adhered to the king ; a moderate party of true patriots, who only wished to reform the abuses of the prerogative, and other real evils ; the puritans, who sought to overthrow the church ; and the republicans, who wished to ruin the monarchy as well as the church. These three parties united against the king, who soon found that there was no alternative for him but to take up arms. Nearly all the peers were royalists, but lord Essex sided with the puritans. The members of this party affected great plainness in dress, and wore their hair cropped close to their heads, in contrast to the splendid dress and flowing hair fashionable at the time. Hence they obtained the name of *Roundheads*, while they called the royalists *Cavaliers*, or *Malignants*. It was not perhaps entirely to be attributed to party-spirit that the royalists obtained this disgraceful title from the puritans. Charles's necessities compelled him to enlist any soldiers he could obtain, and many of these were men of profligate character, who expressed their contempt for the rigid manners of the puritans, not by setting them a better example, but by running into all

kinds of excesses, and ridiculing religion and virtue. Many Romanists also fought on the king's side; which was quite enough, in those days, to set the people against him, so great was the dread that the Romish faith should ever again become the national religion.

The king set up his standard at Nottingham Castle, August 25, 1642. The first battle was fought at Edge Hill, in Warwickshire; the royal troops being commanded by Charles's nephews, princes Maurice and Rupert; the parliamentary by lord Essex. It was decided in favour of the king, who then retired to Oxford, which town always remained faithful to him. The war lasted three years, and was at first generally favourable to the royalists. The king made several negotiations for peace, but nothing would satisfy the parliament but the destruction of the established church, to which Charles was sincerely attached.

Colonel Hampden fell in the first year, at Chalgrave, near Oxford. He was a man of such exemplary character, that even the royalists were sorry for his death; and Charles sent his own surgeon to him, when he heard he was wounded; but he was already dead. Lord Falkland, a royalist general of equal worth, was also slain at Newbury. The principal

commanders on the royalist side, besides the king's nephews, were the marquises of Worcester, Newcastle, and Hertford, and lord Goring. On the popular side were lord Fairfax and his son, sir Thomas, and generals Waller, Massey, and Skippon; until at length the military skill and talent, and the ambition of Oliver Cromwell made him leader of the whole. In 1644, he completely defeated the royalist forces under prince Rupert, at Marston Moor, in Yorkshire; and from this time the cause of Charles declined. After several more engagements, he was so entirely overthrown at Naseby, in Northamptonshire, that, in despair of retrieving his position, he threw himself upon the protection of his own countrymen, the Scotch, at Newark, which place they were then besieging; and they were base enough to deliver him up to the parliamentary forces, on condition of receiving the arrears of their pay. He was taken to Hampton Court, from whence he escaped to Titchfield House; after which he was induced to take refuge in Carisbrook Castle, in the Isle of Wight, commanded by colonel Hammond, but soon found he was a prisoner.

During the rebellion, archbishop Laud had been brought to trial by the parliament, and most wickedly condemned to death, for no other reason than his

zealous attachment to his sovereign and the church, which, at this unhappy period, was accounted a crime. With the archbishop fell the Church of England for a time. The use of our beautiful Liturgy was forbidden ; the clergy, driven from their livings, endured the greatest sufferings, and were, in many instances, reduced, with their families, to absolute beggary. In the diary of John Evelyn, a learned man and pious Christian, we find this entry :—December 25, 1655. “ There was now no more notice taken of Christmas-day in churches. I went to London, where Dr. Wild preached the funeral sermon of preaching, this being the last day, after which Cromwell’s proclamation was to take place, that none of the Church of England should dare to preach, administer the sacraments, or teach in schools.” After this, those who still held conscientiously the principles of the church were compelled to have the baptism of their children, the administration of the communion, and the church services performed privately in their houses, at the risk of incurring heavy fines or imprisonment.

We will now return to Charles, whom we left in his prison of Carisbrook Castle. After making some efforts to escape, he was taken to Windsor, and thence to London, and brought to trial in Westminster Hall,

for high treason, because he had fought against the parliament ; but he refused to acknowledge the authority of the court. “ I do not come here,” said he, “ as submitting to this court. I see no house of lords here that may constitute a parliament, and the king, too, must be in and part of a parliament.” “ If it does not satisfy you,” replied Bradshaw, the president, “ we are satisfied with our authority, which we have from God and the people.” The Scotch sent their protest against the proceedings for bringing to trial the king whom they had betrayed ; but his foes were determined on his death. Charles continued throughout to refuse to plead. The trial lasted six days ; on the seventh he was brought up to receive sentence. Bradshaw, with a stern countenance and unfeeling manner, delivered it :—“ The court adjudge Charles Stuart, as a tyrant, traitor, murderer, and public enemy to the good people of this nation, should be put to death, by severing his head from his body.” The guards then took away their prisoner, amid the shouts and insults of the populace ; but nothing could disturb the true dignity of this royal sufferer. A common soldier even spat upon him as he passed ; he only said, “ Poor souls, they would treat their generals in the same way for sixpence.” Another soldier, of better

disposition, prayed "God, bless him!" for which an officer struck him to the ground. The king said, "The punishment, methinks, exceeds the offence."

Returning to his apartments in St. James's Palace, accompanied by bishop Juxon, he begged not to be disturbed by visitors, but to be allowed to pass the remainder of his life in preparation to meet his God. Charles had always been, as you already know, sincerely attached to the established church, and had long ere this found support, under the heavy trials of his life, in prayer and communion with his Heavenly Father. From these he had derived the strength which now enabled him to meet with firmness and piety this last blow which was to fall upon him. Our blessed Lord said, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell;" and in this godly fear did the persecuted king find true courage.

His elder children were, with their mother, in Holland; but the duke of Gloucester and the princess Elizabeth were allowed to take leave of their father. The little duke was only seven years old, and the king, taking him on his knee, said to him, "Mark, my child, what I say: they will cut off my head, and when I

am gone, they will want perhaps to make you king ; but you must not be a king so long as your brothers, Charles and James, are alive ; therefore, I charge you, do not be made a king by them." The little boy looked earnestly in his father's face, and said, "I will be torn in pieces first." The parting between Charles and these children was so affecting as to move even his enemies to tears. The health of the princess received so severe a shock from it that she never recovered, but died of grief shortly after, and we will hope that she and her father now dwell together in glory.

On the 30th of January, the day appointed for the execution, Charles rose early and dressed himself carefully. The good bishop Juxon, who remained with him to the last, administered the holy communion to him and prayed with him. He then desired the bishop to read to him some portion of Scripture, and Juxon chose the lesson for the day, Matt. xxvii., a chapter describing the sufferings and death of our Holy Redeemer, and well calculated to give strength and consolation to one on the point of entering into His presence.

He was attended to the scaffold by the good bishop, and his faithful servant, Mr. Herbert. It was erected

opposite a window of the banqueting-room at Whitehall, and the streets were crowded with people come to see him die. The bishop reminded him that he had but one more stage to pass, which, though painful and troublesome, would take him from earth to heaven. "I go," said the king, "from a corruptible crown to an incorruptible, where no disturbance can be." He declared himself innocent towards his people, though guilty in the sight of God ; and acknowledged that he was justly punished for the unjust sentence he had permitted to be executed on Strafford. Just before laying his head on the block, he held up his hand to Juxon and said, "Remember !" His head was then struck off at a blow, and the executioner, holding it up by the hair, said, "This is the head of a traitor !" No sooner was this fearful deed accomplished than the minds of all the beholders seemed to undergo a sudden revulsion. They were as much shocked and surprised as if they had never expected it, and wondered how they could have permitted it to take place. Juxon was desired to explain what was meant by that last word, "Remember !" and replied, that it was to remind him of the king's earnest charge to the prince of Wales to forgive his father's murderers. Charles was beheaded on January 30, 1649,

in the forty-ninth year of his age and the twenty-fifth of his reign. A service has since been instituted commemorative of the event, and "to implore the mercy of God, that neither the guilt of that sacred and innocent blood, nor those other sins by which God was provoked to deliver up both us and our king into the hands of cruel and unreasonable men, may at any time hereafter be visited upon us or our posterity." If we cannot commend him for his early measures, which were too often ill-judged and unjust, his sincere piety and his resolute defence of the Church of England from the violence of her foes, with the Christian meekness with which he endured adversity, must dispose us to reverence his name, and to acknowledge the justice of his title of "King Charles the Martyr."

He had several children, of whom Charles, the eldest, succeeded him. There is an interesting story told of one of his children, a little girl, who died at the age of four. She was very ill, and one of her attendants told her to pray. She answered that she could not say her long prayer, but would try to say her short one. Then, kneeling on her bed, she prayed, "Lighten my darkness, O Lord God, and let me not sleep the sleep of death." And then she laid her little head upon her

pillow and died ; the first to welcome to a happier world the soul of her murdered father. Of his other children, Henry and Elizabeth died young ; Charles and James reigned in England ; Mary married the prince of Orange ; and Henrietta, the duke of Orleans, brother to Louis the fourteenth of France. The queen, Henrietta Maria, remained in France, supported by a small pension from Louis, until the accession of her son Charles, when she returned to England ; but after living here five years, she once more took up her abode in France, and died there in 1699.





CHAPTER XXX.

THE COMMONWEALTH—FROM 1649 TO 1660.

As soon as the execution of king Charles had taken place, the House of Lords was abolished, as “useless and dangerous,” and all laws and public acts were ordered to be carried out in the names of the “keepers of the liberties of England.” The Scots who, although they had opposed Charles, and taken up arms against him, had no idea of destroying the royal office, immediately acknowledged as their sovereign, Charles, the eldest son of the late king, and he was crowned at Scone.

In Ireland, the royalist cause was supported by the marquises of Ormond and Clanricarde.

Oliver Cromwell, whose great talent and energy raised him to be leader in all public measures, was sent to Ireland as Lord Lieutenant, and soon succeeded in bringing that country to submission. He then proceeded to Scotland, leaving his son-in-law, general Ireton, to keep order in Ireland. Having defeated the royalist forces at Dunbar, the Scotch

were in general disposed to acknowledge his superiority. With such of the army as remained faithful to his cause, Charles then suddenly marched into England, hoping that he should be joined by numbers sufficient to make good his claim to the throne ; but in this he was disappointed. On the 3rd of September, 1651, he was totally defeated by Cromwell at Worcester, and his brave little army destroyed, or taken prisoners. It is very sad to be compelled by truth to say that these prisoners were sent by Cromwell as slaves to the West Indies ; a measure, so cruel and atrocious, that nothing could justify it.

After this defeat, Charles wandered about the country in disguise for six weeks ; and although a high reward was offered for his apprehension, and his secret was known to more than forty persons, some of them very poor, not one was found base enough to betray him.

First he found shelter at Whiteladies, in Staffordshire, a house belonging to a family named Giffard ; and when this was no longer a safe retreat for him, he was placed under the care of an honest family named Penderell, tenants of Mr. Giffard. I dare say you have heard of the custom of wearing an oak-apple in the hat on the 29th of May, and have won-

dered how it originated. I will tell you. One whole day, Charles was driven to conceal himself in a thick oak in Boscobel Wood, and actually saw the parliamentary troops pass beneath the tree in search of him. This tree is still standing, and is called "the king's oak." In memory, then, of Charles's concealment in this tree, little boys wear an oak-apple on the anniversary of his restoration to the throne.

After many narrow escapes, he at length succeeded in reaching the coast of Sussex, from whence in a short time he was enabled to cross over to France, and rejoin his mother.

Thus, like David, was Charles made to fly before his foes, and endure many hardships ; but, unlike the royal Psalmist, he drew no lesson of wisdom and piety from his early trials, as we shall find when next we meet with him.

During this period, the parliament was carrying on the government of the country with a very high hand. But Cromwell thought that now it was a good opportunity for him to take the reins himself ; and boldly going to the House of Commons, where the remnant of the Long Parliament were sitting, he placed soldiers at all the doors ; and after uttering the coarsest abuse against the members, he stamped

on the floor, and at this signal, the soldiers came in, turned out all the members, and locked the doors. Considering that the late king had been deposed and executed on account of his "*unconstitutional*" government, this was a curious specimen of a *constitutional* mode of dissolving parliament!

Cromwell's power was now supreme ; but, to keep up appearances, he called another council, called Barebones' Parliament, from a low, fanatical person, who, according to a profane custom prevalent among the puritans, was named Praise-God Barebones, and who presided in it.

As this assembly was composed of ignorant and violent men, they soon (as Cromwell probably foresaw) made themselves ridiculous by their measures. They proposed to do away with the clergy altogether, as a remnant of popery ; and with the common law, as an unnecessary trammel upon free-born Englishmen ; so that Cromwell had soon a very good pretext for dismissing them, and holding the supreme authority alone. The title of Lord Protector of the Commonwealth was conferred upon him, and he was even offered that of king ; but through motives of prudence, declined it. He ruled with military law, with more despotic sway than any king had done.

The country was divided into eleven districts, each under a major-general, who levied taxes for the support of government, which were especially heavy on the known royalists.

Cromwell soon made himself feared and respected by foreign nations. An ambassador sent into Holland on the part of the Commonwealth, having been murdered by some royalists who were living there, he made war on the country, and obtained several decisive victories over the celebrated Dutch admirals, Van Tromp and de Ruyter. Until this time the Dutch had been considered masters of the sea, but they were now compelled to sue for peace, and the English navy has ever since maintained the superiority over that of all other countries.

He then humbled the Spaniards, by taking from them the island of Jamaica, which we still retain. In fact, by his great talent for command and his untiring energy, Cromwell soon made himself feared both at home and abroad. Many very useful measures were carried out by him. The post-office arrangements were much improved ; but his dread of plots induced him to adopt the mean expedient of keeping the officers connected with it in his pay, for the sake of reading the letters of suspected parties. Banking was first

practised at this period. The disturbed state of affairs made gentlemen afraid of keeping their own money; and they consequently placed it in the care of their goldsmiths, who paid them interest for it, and thus became the first bankers. The island of St. Helena was taken from the Dutch and colonized; and William Penn, the son of one of Cromwell's admirals, first took English emigrants to settle in Philadelphia. The protector used all his influence in aid of foreign Protestants, and generally succeeded in procuring better treatment for them from the Romanist governments. He greatly extended the commerce of our country; and although he himself ruled in defiance of the constitutional laws, he yet compelled every one else to submit to them.

After the death of Ireton, Ireland was governed by a gentleman named Fleetwood, also son-in-law to the protector; and finally, by his son, Henry Cromwell, a wise and good young man, who did all in his power to improve the people of that country. But with all Cromwell's prosperity, he was not a happy man. Some have imagined that his heart was once truly converted to God; but when Aunt Anne looks at his conduct even to the end of life, and to the sweet assurance of our blessed Saviour (see John x. 28), and of St. Paul

(see Phil. i. 6), she cannot admit such a supposition. Temptation overtook him, and he did not seek the aid of Him who, with the temptation would have made a way to escape, that he might be able to bear it. He suffered his ambition to get the better of him, till at length he compassed the death of the sovereign to whom he had sworn allegiance, and usurped his authority. He had neither the approval of his family, nor of his conscience. His mother, to whom he was warmly attached, condemned him ; and his favourite daughter, Mrs. Claypole, on her deathbed, remonstrated with him on his guilty course, in terms which filled him with remorse and grief. The latter part of his life was passed in misery. A book was published, called "Killing no murder," trying to prove that there would be no crime in putting him to death. He read it, and never had another moment's peace. So great was his terror, that he wore armour beneath his clothes ; never slept in the same apartment more than two or three nights together ; and when he was going out, always carefully concealed the road he meant to take.

We cannot be surprised to read of his sufferings, when we remember the murdered king, and his son dispossessed of his inheritance ; his fellow-countrymen sent into slavery for no other fault than their loyalty

to their lawful sovereign ; the clergy driven from their homes and scattered throughout the country in beggary and misery ; and the beautiful churches and cathedrals, in many cases, either wholly destroyed or turned into stables for his troops. Cromwell is an awful example of the distracting terrors of a guilty conscience. His constitution broke down beneath the terrible struggle of his mind ; and he died on the anniversary of his victory over the royalists at Worcester, September 3, 1658, a worn-out old man, at the age of fifty-nine. He was buried with great pomp in Westminster Abbey.

Richard Cromwell, his son, was chosen protector in his stead ; but he had neither the talents nor the ambition of his father, and very soon resigned his power, and retired into private life at Cheshunt, in Hertfordshire. Henry also resigned his high office in Ireland, and, like his brother, passed the remainder of his life in retirement, and much respected for his upright character.

For a time there was great confusion throughout the country. No one knew what was best to be done. At length general Monk, who commanded the army in Scotland, assembled together the remains of the Long Parliament ; these soon summoned another par-

liament, in which the restoration of the king was proposed and at once agreed upon. A deputation was sent to Breda, in the Netherlands, to invite him to return ; and on his birthday, May 29, 1660, Charles entered London in triumph, greeted by shouts of welcome, and such transports of joy that he said, laughing, " It must have been my own fault that I did not come back before, since every one tells me that he desired my restoration."

A very great poet lived in the time of the Commonwealth—Milton, the author of " Paradise Lost," and other poems. He was Latin Secretary to Cromwell, and wrote also several political prose works, which are not, however, to be compared with his poetry. When he composed " Paradise Lost" he had become perfectly blind, and was accustomed to recite the poem as he proceeded with it, to one of his two daughters, who dearly loved their father, and took pleasure in writing down, from his dictation, the noblest uninspired poem which has ever sprung from human genius, under the influence of Christian principles.

When Aunt Anne has added that air-pumps and speaking-trumpets were invented in the time of Cromwell, she has told her young readers all that her memory had retained of the deeds of the Common-

wealth ; and she cannot help adding a prayer that God may, of His infinite mercy, preserve this land in future from rebellion and conspiracy, from foreign enemies and domestic disturbances ; that we His people, and the sheep of His pasture, may give Him thanks for ever, and show forth His praise from generation to generation, through Jesus Christ, our only Saviour and Redeemer.





CHAPTER XXXI.

CHARLES THE SECOND—FROM 1660 TO 1685.

CHARLES began his reign by causing the men who had brought about his father's death to be tried. A few of the leaders were executed, and others sent into banishment, but the rest were pardoned. But if unwilling to show severity to his enemies, he was also very indifferent about rewarding those who had been faithful to him, and lost their fortunes in his cause, but whom he now, with but few exceptions, treated with total neglect. Charles was one of those who grow no wiser by experience ; and it is generally observed that those who are not improved by adversity are made the worse by it. Brought up by his mother, and having lived much in countries professing the Romish religion, he was a papist at heart, although he was afraid to acknowledge it openly, as his brother James, duke of York, did. To all really spiritual religion, which He who looks at the heart can alone approve, he was an entire stranger, as well as to the most ordinary principles of honour and virtue. He

was not deficient in talent, and was noted for his wit and easy grace of manner, so that he obtained the title of "the merry monarch;" and his people were at first misled by his pleasant manners to give him credit for better qualities than experience proved him to possess. In fact he was utterly selfish, unprincipled, and careless of the real welfare of his kingdom; and from the first abandoned himself to the most vicious indulgences and the wildest pursuits of pleasure that ever disgraced a monarch of this country. A sad return to make to that God who had so mercifully led and delivered him from the power of his enemies when he fled before them.

Aunt Anne would gladly pass over this wicked man's reign altogether; but that it is necessary her young friends should become in some degree acquainted with the causes which led to the just expulsion of the Stuart family from the throne, and the firm establishment of the Protestant succession in the house of Hanover, which has led to so much of peace and prosperity in our days.

One of the first acts of this reign was the restoration to their sees and livings of the bishops and clergy, who had been deprived of them during the late troubles; but this, a right measure in itself, was

made a cause of much discontent by the harsh and un-conciliatory spirit displayed towards the puritans and dissenters, who would probably have joined the established church, had more regard been shown to their feelings. A still severer spirit was displayed in the attempt to force episcopacy and our English Liturgy on the Scotch, who have always preferred Presbyterianism. Many of them died by the hands of the executioner, and others went into voluntary exile, rather than submit to such tyrannical interference with their liberty of conscience; and these exiles laid the foundation of many British colonies in North America. You have perhaps heard Mrs. Hemans' beautiful song of the "Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in New England," written in commemoration of this event, and will not take it amiss if Aunt Anne insert one or two of its stanzas.

“ Not as the conqueror comes,
They, the true-hearted, came ;
Not with the roll of the stirring drums,
And the trumpet that sings of fame ;
Not as the flying come,
In silence and in fear ;—
They shook the depths of the desert gloom
With their hymns of lofty cheer.
What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine ?

The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?—
They sought a faith's pure shrine.
Aye, call it holy ground,
The soil where first they trod.
They have left unstain'd what there they found—
Freedom to worship God."

Four years after his accession, in 1664, Charles allowed himself to be persuaded to make a very unnecessary war against the Dutch, which was terminated without any decided advantage to either side, though at one time the Dutch actually sailed up the Thames, and burnt three of our men-of-war, to the deep humiliation of the English ; and a lamentable proof it is of the folly and levity of the king, that, while this disgrace was occurring, he was supping at the house of the duchess of Monmouth, where the company diverted themselves with—*hunting a moth!** Oh, to what will not the mind of man descend, when blinded by sensuality and left to itself!

In the autumn of 1665, the plague broke out in London, and raged so fiercely that nearly one hundred thousand persons died of it. But even this awful scourge from the hand of a justly offended God, failed to awaken better feelings in Charles. He and his dissolute companions continued to abandon themselves

* Pepys's Diary.

to the most shameless riot and profligacy, and the evil example of the court was but too much followed throughout the country. The following year, September 3, 1666, was rendered memorable by the great fire of London. It broke out in the house of a baker near London Bridge, and, as many of the houses were at that time built of wood, and the season had been unusually dry, it spread with fearful rapidity. Mr. Evelyn, in his "Diary," gives the following graphic account of this awful calamity, of which he was an eye-witness. "All the sky was of a fiery aspect, like the top of a burning oven, and the light seen about forty miles round, for many nights. God grant mine eyes may never behold the like, who now saw about ten thousand houses all in one flame ; the noise, and cracking, and thunder of the impetuous flames, the shrieking of women and children, the hurry of people, the fall of towers, houses, and churches, was like an hideous storm ; and the air all about so hot and inflamed that, at the last, one was not able to approach it ; so that they were forced to stand still and let the flames burn on, which they did, for near two miles in length and one in breadth. The clouds also of smoke were dismal, and reached, upon a computation, near fifty miles in length."

Very few lives were lost in this dreadful fire ; but the destruction of property, and ruin to thousands, rendered it even a greater calamity than the plague of the preceding year had been. It was stopped at length by the expedient of blowing up several houses with gunpowder, so as to stop the communication of the fire from house to house. Thirteen thousand houses were burnt down, besides the cathedral of St. Paul's, eighty-six parish churches, six chapels, the Royal Exchange, Guildhall, the Custom House, and four stone bridges. The king and his brother James exerted themselves to the utmost to stop the progress of the flames, and to provide for the sufferers, reduced to beggary by the loss of all their property, and driven out into the open fields without a shelter. Twenty thousand people were scattered about in Islington and Highgate, "lying upon heaps of what they could save from the fire, ready to perish from hunger and destitution, yet not asking one penny for relief."*

Even Charles was roused for a time from his indolent abandonment to pleasure, and in the following month humbled himself and his people before God in a national fast ; but, alas ! God might well have spoken as He did by His prophet Isaiah (lviii. 5—14),

* Horne's "Life of John Evelyn."

“Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast and an acceptable day to the Lord?” &c. Charles’s repentance was very short-lived; his idle companions gathered around him, and he soon laid aside his unusual sobriety, and joined once more in the wild gaiety and dissipation more congenial with his selfish nature than serious thought and prudent conduct.

Dreadful as was the suffering at the time to thousands rendered destitute by this great fire, it was productive of much good in the end. The old town of London was ill built; the streets narrow and close, and the houses, most of them, of wood. The frequent occurrence of the plague and other contagious diseases, was to be attributed to these evils, and to the filthy and ill-ventilated state of the houses; for our worthy ancestors by no means paid the attention to cleanliness which is now considered necessary. For instance, instead of the neat carpets we are accustomed to see, the floors were then strewed with rushes, fragrant reeds, or branches of trees; and as these decayed, they were not removed, but a fresh supply strewn over the old ones; and when you think of the accumulated dust,

decayed vegetable matter, fragments of food, &c. which thus remained for months unswept, you will not wonder that the city of London was frequently visited with plague, sweating-sickness, and other diseases never heard of now. When it was rebuilt, greater attention was paid to ventilation, &c. ; the streets were made much wider, and the houses constructed of brick or stone, so that there is no longer any danger of a fire so extensive as that of 1666.

Those of my young friends who are acquainted with London must have seen St. Paul's Cathedral, the magnificent building then planned by the celebrated architect sir Christopher Wren, a man of learning, and of a quiet Christian spirit, who did honour to the troublous times in which he lived. He was spared to see the completion of this noble work, which required thirty-five years for its erection ; and was buried in it when he died ; the building itself, as the Latin inscription on his monument suggests, forming the most appropriate memorial of this great and worthy man. You have also probably seen the Monument, near London Bridge ; this too was built by sir Christopher Wren, to commemorate the great fire.

At the period of which I am writing, Louis the fourteenth was king of France. He resembled

Charles the second in his profligacy and love of pleasure, but was more attentive than the English king to the wellbeing of his country. He was a papist, and knew that Charles in secret favoured the Romish faith, and that he found the watchfulness of the parliament in favour of Protestantism a great check upon his own designs. In order, therefore, to enable him to do without a parliament altogether, Louis paid Charles a large annual pension, on the promise that he would openly declare himself a papist, and make war with the Protestant States of Holland. Charles had at this time a ministry called the "Cabal," from the initial letters of the five men who composed it,—Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley, and Lauderdale ; and perhaps in all England he could not have found five more unprincipled men than these. Amongst them they soon contrived the war with Holland, which continued, without decided advantage to either side, three or four years, when it was terminated by a treaty of peace ; and the prince of Orange, who was stadtholder, or chief of the United States of Holland, married the princess Mary, daughter of James, duke of York.

By this time the English had begun to suspect their king's inclination to popery ; and the parliament, be-

coming alarmed, passed some very severe measures against the Romanists. On this Charles dissolved parliament, after it had sat seventeen years, and summoned another, which, however, went still greater lengths, and tried to pass a *bill of exclusion*, as it was called, to prevent the duke of York from succeeding to the crown, because he was an acknowledged papist; but Charles refused his assent to it. It is one proof how general had become the corruption of which the court had set the example, that at this time a number of pretended plots were set on foot to bring the papists into discredit, and to frighten Charles into giving his consent to the severe laws proposed against them. A man of infamous character, named Titus Oates, was the chief witness against these pretended conspirators, who were mostly tried by judge Jeffereys, whose atrocious wickedness has made his name for ever odious. By means of these bad men a great many innocent persons were brought to the scaffold, without an effort to save them on the part of Charles, whose vices had made him so unpopular that he was afraid to interfere in their behalf.

Among other sufferers from this "unjust judge" was lord William Russell, a nobleman of high character, who was accused of being concerned in a trea-

sonable plot against the king, called the Rye House plot, from a house of that name in Hertfordshire, where the conspirators met. His wife, a beautiful and virtuous lady, acted as his secretary during his trial. Little was proved against him, but justice had fled from England, and this noble-minded gentleman was condemned and beheaded !

Algernon Sydney, son of the earl of Leicester, suffered the same fate with as little justice, being a man of irreproachable character.

It is said that the duke of York was the instigator of some of these severities, and that the king warned him of the growing discontent of the people, saying, " Brother, I am too old to go again on my travels; you may if you choose it." Indeed, dear children, it is most painful to read of the atrocities which were shamelessly committed in this reign, when judgment was perverted, the innocent suffered, and " the vilest men were exalted." " Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed ! What will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation which shall come from far ? To whom will ye flee for help ?" (Isaiah x.) If Charles had any feeling at all, he must have been very unhappy to see the mischief his unprin-

ciplined conduct had brought upon the country ; but no space for repentance was afforded to him ; for he was seized with a fit of apoplexy, which caused his death, after a few days' illness, February 6, 1685, in the fifty-fifth year of his age, and the twenty-fifth of his reign.

Charles the second is a lamentable instance of talents perverted, and turned to the disgrace of their possessor, from want of Christian principle. His fascinating manners attracted to him the witty, and the lovers of pleasure ; but the good and the wise mourned over his vices, and avoided his corrupt court ; for how can those who love the Lord God take delight in the society of men, who "glory in their shame," despise the godly, and "who, knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."

It is a relief to read of some good men who lived at this time of general iniquity, when the wicked walked on every side.

Sir Matthew Hale, a most upright judge, and worthy man, was one of these bright exceptions ; and Mr. John Evelyn, to whom I have before alluded, the author of "Sylva," a valuable work on forest-trees.

He paid so much attention to this subject, that many gentlemen of property were induced to plant their estates with timber, which had, till then, been much neglected ; and considerable improvement was thus effected both in the beauty and value of their lands. Mr. Evelyn was one of the principal founders of the Royal Society, in which he was aided by Robert Boyle, another of the learned men whose names shed lustre on this reign. Those who sincerely believe in Christ, and know by their own happy experience the blessedness of such a faith, are ever most desirous of extending the "good tidings" of the Gospel to others ; and thus these two excellent men combined in the formation of the "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel," which has since been the blessed instrument of proclaiming salvation to thousands. Until this time no society of the kind had been established in England : only now and then a man, whose soul was filled with Christian love to his fellow-men, went forth alone, amidst "perils by water and perils by land," to preach the Gospel to heathen nations ; but in our happier days, Evelyn's society is but one among many. We have also that glorious society, the Church Missionary and others, all bent on the same holy work. Let us hope that it is a proof of the wider

growth of true Christianity amongst us, and may we, by God's grace, daily "go on unto perfection."

Mr. Evelyn was the means of introducing to public notice Gibbons, the celebrated sculptor in wood, who brought this branch of art to the highest degree of excellence. The most beautiful specimens of his powers are to be seen in Windsor Castle, at Petworth, in Surrey, and at Chatsworth, in Derbyshire, the magnificent seat of the duke of Devonshire.

This reign seems to have been particularly favourable to poetry, since, besides Milton, whom I have already mentioned, Dryden, the translator of Virgil, Otway, Cowley, Waller, and Butler, lived in it. Halley, the astronomer, also wrote his valuable works at this period.

There are a few useful inventions likewise attributed to the reign of Charles the second. Among them, fire-engines and buckles, both considered so indispensable now, that one wonders how people ever contrived to do without them. The want of engines may have been one cause why the great fire raged so extensively, since without them it must have been impossible to procure enough water to put it out. And how people managed to fasten their horses' harness without buckles, Aunt Anne is puzzled to guess.

The twopenny post was established in this reign. Charles the second married Catherine of Braganza, daughter of the king of Portugal. They had no children ; and as the bill of exclusion had not been suffered to pass, he was succeeded by his papist brother, James, duke of York, under the title of James the second.





CHAPTER XXXII.

JAMES THE SECOND—FROM 1685 TO 1688.

ON the death of his brother Charles, James was immediately proclaimed king, on his promise to maintain the constitution and the church as established by the law of the land. But nothing could be more at variance with this promise than his conduct. I have before told you that he had been educated as a papist, and that he was more sincere in his profession of faith than Charles. No sooner was he seated on the throne, than he showed himself determined to restore the Romish religion in England. He publicly attended mass, set aside the laws against papists, filled his court with monks and jesuits, and sent an ambassador to the pope Innocent the eleventh, proposing a reconciliation of the kingdom with the see of Rome ; but the earl of Castlemaine, who was entrusted with the embassy, was coldly received by the Pope, who saw how imprudent was James's conduct.

You will easily believe what discontent was kindled throughout the country by such measures as these.

The duke of Monmouth, a relative of the king, took advantage of the general dissatisfaction, and excited a rebellion against him, hoping that he might be able to persuade the people to place him on the throne, to which, however, he had no just claim. The earl of Argyle joined him, and went to Scotland for the purpose of better assisting him in the north, but was taken at Edinburgh and beheaded.

The whole scheme was badly planned, and Monmouth was totally defeated at Sedgemoor, near Bridgewater. He fled from the field of battle till his horse fell from fatigue, and then wandered about in disguise, having no food for several days but some peas, which he had gathered. He was found at last concealed in a ditch, and beheaded on Tower Hill. His pleasing manners and prepossessing appearance had made him a great favourite with the people, who much regretted his death. Some other persons implicated in this rebellion were tried by the wicked judge Jefferies, and treated with the most revolting cruelty and the coarsest insolence. Besides no less than two hundred and fifty executions, he sent numbers to the West Indies, to work as slaves in the plantations. James made this bad man his lord chancellor !

Once freed from anxiety about the duke of Mon-

mouth, the king still more openly pursued his plans in favour of Romanism. He gave himself up to the counsels of his confessor, father Peters; introduced papists into every civil and military office; insisted on forcing a papist as president on Magdalen College, Oxford, and when disobeyed by the fellows, who chose a Protestant as their chief, he expelled twenty-five of them, with their new president Mr. Hough, though he had no legal right to do any thing of the kind. Then he issued an order for universal toleration, and caused seven of the bishops, who refused to read this proclamation, to be imprisoned in the Tower; but they were very soon acquitted, to the great joy of the people and the unbounded indignation of the king. He also declared his right and his intention to free himself entirely from the trammels of a parliament, and rule alone.

Although much and justly displeased at this conduct, his subjects bore it with tolerable patience, because they believed themselves secure of a Protestant successor to this bigoted king. James was first married to Anne Hyde, daughter of the earl of Clarendon, and had two daughters; Mary, married to William, prince of Orange; and Anne, to George, prince of Denmark. Both these daughters and their

husbands were Protestants. James's second wife was Mary Beatrice of Modena, a beautiful and clever, but not very prudent woman. As they had been married some years without children, the nation looked to the princess Mary of Orange as their future queen ; when, unexpectedly, a little son was born to James, to his very great joy, for he thought it would tend to secure him on the throne. But now, deprived of their hope of Protestant succession, the people began to think of dethroning the king, as the only means of preserving their liberties and the established church.

While James, then, was rejoicing over his baby son, and getting the Pope to be his godfather, many persons of high rank entered into communication with the prince of Orange. Every thing was prepared for his arrival before the king awoke from his dream of security ; and when at last the information was communicated to him, that he might expect an invasion from his son-in-law, he was so stunned as at first to be unable either to think or act. Then he set about repealing all his offensive measures in favour of Romanism ; but the people gave him no credit for sincerity, believing that he only acted from fear. All his papist advisers now fled

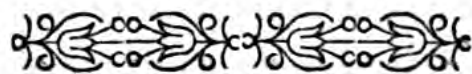
from him, and James sent away his wife and child, under the care of the count de Lauzun, to France. Then, without a single effort to preserve his throne, the unhappy king tried to make his own escape, as soon as he knew William was in England. The people, thus left without a ruler, committed many excesses. They destroyed all the Romanist chapels, and so pelted the wicked judge Jefferies, that he is said to have died in consequence of their ill usage.

William of Orange landed at Torbay, November 5, 1688, and was soon joined by numbers of all ranks, and proceeded to London. James did not succeed in escaping, but was brought back to London, to the great annoyance of William, who wished to avoid meeting him. He desired him to live at Rochester, from which place he made his escape to France, by the connivance of William, and was assigned a residence at St. Germain's by Louis the fourteenth.

A council was assembled, which declared that James had abdicated the throne, and that William and Mary were chosen by the nation to reign jointly, the chief authority being placed in the hands of the prince. And thus was brought about the English Revolution, which was as honourable to the country as the Rebellion had been the reverse. It was rendered absolutely

necessary, by the blind determination of James to restore popery and establish despotism, and was conducted with a calm resolution that calls forth equal admiration and respect. Still Aunt Anne cannot help pitying the poor, misguided James. He was really well-meaning, though mistaken; and it must have wounded him deeply to find his children made the means of punishing him. "God help me! my own children are forsaking me!" he is said to have exclaimed, when told that the princess Anne had joined her sister. Doubtless it was this sorrowful feeling which so stunned him as to render him incapable of exertion.

Although so imprudent a king, James, while duke of York, had done good service to his country by the improvements he made in the navy, and is said to have been the inventor of the system of sea-signals, so useful to sailors. His son, whose birth cost his father so dearly, was named James Francis Edward, and was afterwards known as the Pretender; we shall hear more of him in the next reign.





CHAPTER XXXIII.

WILLIAM THE THIRD AND MARY—FROM 1688 TO 1702.

THE prince who had been called by the English to reign over them, was worthy of their choice ; a man of upright character and honourable feeling, of undaunted bravery in war, and wise and prudent in the administration of government. But he was not at first a popular king ; his manners were cold and reserved, contrasting unfavourably with the easy familiarity and sociability to which the people had been accustomed in Charles the second. But this reserve entirely disappeared in the battle-field. Once upon his charger, William became all animation and spirit : and on one occasion, when prince of Orange, having been shot in the arm, and observing that the soldiers were, in consequence, a little dispirited, he took off his hat, and waved it in the air with his wounded arm, to cheer and re-assure them. His health was delicate, and he was very thin, having been wasted from childhood by a perpetual cough and asthma. Queen Mary was sincerely attached to her husband,

and well-content to leave the cares of government entirely in his hands, as the parliament had decreed. William gave his assent to the *Bill of Rights*, an act of parliament by which the limits of the royal prerogative were defined and settled ; and certain rights and privileges granted to the people, for which they had long in vain contended.

Several of the bishops and many of the clergy refused to take an oath of allegiance to William, and among them were some of those very bishops who had been sent to the tower by king James, rather than read his proclamation in favour of universal toleration ; thus proving that their resistance had proceeded from conscientious motives, and not from a spirit of factious opposition to government. They were called non-jurors, and were deprived of their sees and livings. Sancroft, archbishop of Canterbury, having declined taking the oath, was displaced, and the celebrated Dr. Tillotson was elected in his room.

The Scots offered their crown to William and Mary ; but an insurrection, in favour of James, took place in the Highlands, headed by Lord Dundee ; but that nobleman being killed at the battle of Killiecrankie, his followers dispersed ; peace was restored, and a general pardon proclaimed to all who should,

before a particular day, take the oath of allegiance to William at Inverary.

In connection with this regulation, a deed of blood was committed, which has left a sad stain on William's name. A Highland chief, named Macdonald of Glencoe, had deferred taking the oath till the very last day, and then, through a mistake with regard to the place where it was to be administered, he was too late ; but in consideration of the circumstances of the case, he was allowed to go through the ceremony of swearing allegiance on the following day. He had, however, a secret foe, the earl of Breadalbane, chief of the Campbell clan, who took advantage of the delay to wreak a terrible vengeance on the unsuspecting Glencoe. Persuading the king that the Macdonalds were traitors, he induced him to sign an order for the extermination of the clan, and contrived to have the execution of this order entrusted to himself. Under the guise of friendship, a large party of the Campbells visited Macdonald, and were treated by him with the greatest kindness and hospitality. At the end of a fortnight, having secured the mountain passes, these treacherous foes attacked the unarmed Macdonalds, and put to death about forty of them. Macdonald himself was shot in the

arms of his wife, who clung to her husband in the vain hope of defending him, and who was deprived of her reason from the shock of that fearful day. A few escaped to the mountains, and perished there from famine and cold. When the wickedness and mischievous policy of this dreadful massacre were pointed out to William, he made an excuse which Aunt Anne thinks was almost as bad as the deed; namely, that he had signed the warrant in the hurry of business, without being aware of its purport. Sad indeed is it, that a king should become accessory to so shocking a crime, through want of proper caution in the exercise of the authority entrusted to him.

William's government was much opposed in Ireland, in which country the Romanists being then, as now, the most numerous party, James had many supporters. He entered the country in 1689, and kept up a vigorous resistance to the Protestant forces during two years. At length William crossed over to Ireland, and took the field in person, with a large body of Dutch troops, and in a battle on the banks of the river Boyne, completely defeated James, who was then obliged to return to France. By the following year, the Irish were perfectly subdued; and those who still remained faithful to James, were permitted

to emigrate to France, where they were formed into a corps in the French army, called the Irish Brigade, which was kept up for nearly a century.

Throughout his reign, William steadily opposed the ambitious designs of Louis the fourteenth. His Dutch subjects had long been at war with that king, and were now joined by some of the German Protestant states. William was made commander-in-chief of the allied army. In 1692 a powerful fleet, which Louis had prepared for the invasion of England in favour of James, was defeated off La Hogue, by the united English and Dutch fleets.

In 1694, when William had returned to England for a short time, he lost his beloved queen, who died of the small-pox on the 28th of December. This excellent woman, who had always held the reins of government during her husband's absence, had won the confidence and affection of the people by her wise and conciliatory spirit. She was of a quiet, studious turn, and had improved her understanding by much reading, especially on religious subjects; and took great delight in the society of pious and learned clergymen. She set the ladies of her court the good example of being always employed; for, when disengaged from more serious occupation, she

amused herself with needle-work, and especially by working in worsted, chair-covers, carpets, &c. But when I tell you that you owe the introduction of cross-stitch and tent-stitch to queen Mary, you must not imagine that her performances equalled the tasteful patterns, worked in the beautifully dyed Berlin wools of our days. Worsteds-work was then in its infancy, and its style and subjects are well described by Cowper in "the Task"—

" A splendid cover, green and blue,
Yellow and red, of tap'stry richly wrought,
And woven close; or needle-work sublime.
There might ye see the piony spread wide,
The full-blown rose, the shepherd and his lass,
Lap-dog and lambkin with black staring eyes,
And parrots with twin cherries in their beak."

Most little girls now are initiated into the mysteries of cross-stitch; and have decorated mamma's drawing-room with a pretty mat, or presented to dear, good nurse a kettle-holder, which she thinks far too beautiful for use, except, perhaps, on *very* grand occasions; and it is very right that some of their leisure time should be employed in the acquirement of so pretty and graceful an accomplishment, or in the various

wonders of "knitting, netting, and crochet." But there is another kind of needle-work which should by no means be neglected, and of which honourable mention is made in the Acts of the Apostles, (ix. 36—39). Every kind-hearted little girl, who loves her Saviour, and is desirous of attaining to the blessedness promised to those who "consider the poor and needy," will take pleasure in devoting part of her time to that branch of needle-work which adds to their comfort, as well as in the production of those more elegant specimens of her skill, which are to serve as affectionate memorials to her various friends.

William deeply mourned the loss of his excellent queen. As she had died without children, her sister, the Princess Anne, was to be his successor; and an act was passed, settling the crown, after her, on the electress Sophia, of Hanover, daughter of the queen of Bohemia, and grand-daughter of James the first.

William carried on the war against France till 1697, when it was concluded by the peace of Rysvick. But this peace promised to last but a short time. A dispute arose about the Spanish succession, between England and France, and William was once more preparing for hostilities, when he met with an accident which caused his death. Riding one day from

Kensington to Hampton Court, his horse fell with him, and his collar-bone was broken ; not a very serious injury to a strong man ; but William's delicate constitution could not withstand the shock ; fever ensued, and he died about a fortnight after, March 8th, 1702, in the fifty-second year of his age, and the fourteenth of his reign.

Although the *Jacobites** had continued to plot against him throughout his reign, and had made more than one attempt to assassinate him, the king was much regretted by the majority of his subjects. The unpopularity from which he suffered when he first came among them, had vanished beneath the influence of his high moral character, and the gentle kindness of his amiable queen. He had ruled in strict accordance with the principles of the constitution, in this respect greatly differing from his predecessors the Stuarts. A number of societies were established, and laws passed for the suppression of profaneness and vice, and the general improvement of manners. Attention was also paid to the commercial interests of the country : and these, my dear children, are matters which tend to the real glory of a kingdom,

* Adherents of James the second. From *Jacobus*, the Latin for James.

far more than what are called "splendid victories," and "heroic achievements," although these have been of essential service in defending our beloved country from the attacks of her enemies, and in rescuing other nations from tyranny and oppression.

William's continental wars were so expensive that he was obliged to borrow money of his subjects to defray them, and this was the origin of what is called the National Debt, a subject somewhat too complicated for the comprehension of Aunt Anne's young readers. The Bank of England was established in the reign of William the third.

The most celebrated writers of the period were Locke, the philosopher; Bishop Burnet, who wrote the "History of his own Times;" Prior, the poet; and archbishop Tillotson, whose sermons are well known. He was originally a curate at Cheshunt, in Hertfordshire, till his writings brought him into notice, and William honoured him as a friend, and promoted him to be archbishop of Canterbury.

I must now tell you of a very celebrated character who paid a visit to England in this reign. The czar Peter the Great, of Russia, coming to the throne of that empire, found himself master of the very largest, and, at the same time, most uncivilized country in

the world. He was himself nearly uneducated, but was of an active, enterprising spirit, and great natural capacity ; and devoted himself, heart and soul, to the noble task of reforming and instructing his people. To teach his army the discipline practised in other European states, he enlisted as a common soldier in one of his own regiments, and regularly went through the German exercises taught by some officers he had induced to come from Germany for the purpose. Then he turned his attention to the formation of a navy, and for many months resided at Archangel, watching the method of equipping and navigating the different kinds of vessels stationed there. Afterwards, assuming the name of Peter Michaelof, he worked as a ship's carpenter at Saardam, in Holland, where is still preserved a boat built by this energetic emperor. Then he came to England, in order to perfect himself in ship-building, and to acquire any species of information which might be useful to him in his plans of improvement. He still maintained his assumed name, in order to escape the formalities of royalty, and resided at a house called Sayes Court, at Deptford, belonging to our old friend John Evelyn. The grounds had been laid out by Mr. Evelyn with the greatest care, in the formal fashion of the time,



Peter the Great working as a Carpenter at Saardam.

in long walks, and terraces, and was surrounded by a clipped holly hedge, and ornamented with choice shrubs, and beautiful flowers. But Peter had no taste for gardening, and with all his talent and energy, must still have retained much of his native barbarism, for he and his attendants totally ruined these cherished grounds with their rough pastimes ; and the holly hedge, which Evelyn speaks of in his "Diary" as the pride of his garden, was sadly injured by Peter's extraordinary whim for being driven through it backwards and forwards in a wheelbarrow !

John Evelyn lived all through this reign, and died in 1706,* having directed this noble truth, which he had learned by long experience, to be engraved upon his monument :—"That all is vanity which is not honest, and that there is no solid wisdom but in real piety."

* Horne's Life of John Evelyn.





CHAPTER XXXIV.

ANNE—FROM 1702 TO 1714.

ON the death of William the third, his sister-in-law, Anne, second daughter of the deposed king James, peaceably succeeded to the crown. She was made queen in her own right, while her husband, prince George of Denmark, refrained from any interference in the management of public affairs, and led a quiet and retired life. They had had several children, who had all died in their infancy, with the exception of one son, George, duke of Gloucester, who lived to be eleven years old. It was on the occasion of his death, very shortly after that of his aunt, queen Mary, that the Bill of Succession was passed, settling the crown on the electress of Hanover and her heirs, to the exclusion of those members of the Stuart family who were of the Roman Catholic faith. But, although this bill passed both houses, it met much opposition from the Jacobites, who were, you will remember, the adherents of James the second ; and during the whole of Anne's reign, party-

spirit ran very high indeed between the *whigs* and *tories*. In our days, by the term *whig*, we understand one who thinks much of the voice of the people ; and by *tory*, one who leans more to the sovereign. But in queen Anne's time the *tories* inclined to Jacobinism, while the *whigs* were more intent on securing the Protestant succession. The queen herself was a *tory*, and the ministry at the beginning of her reign was principally composed of members of that party ; but Anne had a friend, to whom she had long been attached, Sarah, afterwards duchess of Marlborough, a lady of strong mind, and many good and noble qualities, but unhappily of a proud, imperious temper, which led her to tyrannize over all connected with her, not even sparing her kind and indulgent royal mistress. This lady favoured the *whigs*, and soon contrived to have her own party in power.

I told you that at the time of William's accident he was preparing for another French war. This was carried on by Anne, and is called the "war of the Spanish Succession." It was conducted in Flanders, Germany, and Spain. England, in alliance with other European states, opposed Louis the fourteenth, who was endeavouring to force his grandson, Philip, upon the Spaniards as their king, in opposition to

the claims of the archduke Charles, whom they preferred. It was felt that France would become too powerful for the peace of Europe, were one of her princes allowed to wear the Spanish crown, and a war, which lasted ten years, was undertaken in favour of Charles. I do not intend entering much into the history of this war, as I feel sure my young readers have no more taste than myself for the miseries attendant on every war. But I must tell them something of the duke of Marlborough, the husband of queen Anne's friend, and the most celebrated general England has ever produced, with the exception of our own duke of Wellington, the "hero of Waterloo."

Marlborough was, like all truly brave men, distinguished no less by his humanity than his valour, and could not bear to look upon the sorrow caused by even the most brilliant victory. He had also the most perfect control over his temper; and you will no doubt, remember what Solomon says of such a man: "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city."

The army he commanded was composed of officers and soldiers of many nations; and he must often have been sorely tried in the midst of so many con-

flicting interests ; but he never suffered himself to be provoked to anger, but performed his duty in an upright, straightforward manner, that compelled them to respect him. I have met with an anecdote relating to him at this period, which well exemplifies this remarkable power of self-control.*

Prince Eugene, of Savoy, (one of the commanders in the army) had proposed, at a council of war, that an attack should be made next day on the enemy. Though nothing could be more evidently judicious than this proposal, the duke positively refused to consent to it. The prince rudely called him a coward, and challenged him ; but Marlborough kept his temper, and declined the challenge. On this the prince, being violently enraged, left the council. Early the next morning he was awoken by Marlborough, who, coming to his bedside, desired him to rise, as he was preparing to make the attack, and added, "I could not tell you my determination last night, because there was a person present who was, I knew, in the enemy's interest, and would have betrayed us. I have no doubt we shall conquer, and when the battle is over I shall be ready to accept your challenge."

* Mrs. Markham's "History of England."

The prince, thoroughly ashamed of the violence and injustice of which he had been guilty, apologized for his intemperate conduct ; and the duke said mildly, "I thought, my dear prince, you would be satisfied at last." Many people think it very fine and heroic to be blustering and hasty ; but do you not see, dear children, how much more truly heroic was the conduct pursued by this worthy general, who took no revenge on the man who had so insulted him, but "heaped coals of fire on his head" by his mild and reasonable answer?

I am here tempted to relate another story of the duke of Marlborough, which, although unconnected with this period, is yet an additional proof of his gentle, peace-making temper.

I have told you that the duchess, his wife, was of a very different character, and, although sincerely attached to her excellent husband, she sometimes made even him suffer from her passionate temper. She had a very beautiful head of hair, which the duke greatly admired. On one occasion he felt himself obliged to oppose some wish of the duchess, and to refuse steadily to gratify it, in spite of her repeated solicitations. At length she flew into a violent passion, and the moment the duke left the room,

she took a pair of scissors and cut off all her beautiful tresses, in the hope of plaguing him who only sought her real welfare in refusing what it would have been improper to grant. When they met again, however, not a syllable did he utter on the subject, either then or afterwards, though he must have known the feeling which prompted her to such a piece of unworthy malice. But many years after, the duke died ; and his widow, in arranging his papers, found treasured up in his cabinet all the cherished locks she had cut off to pain him, labelled, "My dear wife's hair !" Oh, dear children, let this little story induce you to watch strictly over your temper. Only think what a sharp pang of regret this really noble-minded woman must have felt at this proof of the tender affection and forbearance of one she so dearly loved, yet had so wounded, and who now, silent in death, could no longer speak the pardon she would so gladly have sought !

In 1704, the duke of Marlborough gained the famous battle of Blenheim, in Germany ; and to commemorate the great skill and valour he had displayed on this occasion, the manor of Woodstock was settled on him and his heirs, and a magnificent mansion, called Blenheim House, built at the expense of the

nation, and presented to him. In 1706, he was equally successful at the battle of Ramilies, and in 1708, and 1709, he gained victories at Oudenarde and Malplaquet.

The strong fortress of Gibraltar was taken in the early part of the war, by sir George Rooke, and has ever since remained in our possession. However, after all the time, money, and human life, expended in this undertaking, the archduke Charles became emperor of Germany, and prince Philip was suffered to reign in Spain ; and very little solid advantage to our country was derived from this long war. Peace was made at Utrecht in 1712.

The duke of Marlborough might naturally have expected to be received kindly and gratefully after the many victories he had gained ; but it was just the reverse. It appears that the duchess had a poor relation named Abigail Hill, whom she introduced to the queen, and she became one of the women of the bed-chamber. Shortly after, she married one of the court pages named Masham, and soon forgot the gratitude due to the duchess ; and, by the most artful flattery, succeeded in gaining a perfect influence over Anne, and in turning her against her former friend. Queen Anne, who was really a good woman, should have

shewn more sense than to trust in one who had thus proved herself capable of both meanness and ingratitude : but although well disposed, she had much weakness of character, and too readily suffered herself to be led by those she loved. She was wearied too of the duchess's violent temper, and so easily permitted herself to be blinded to her better qualities. From these causes it came to pass that, when Marlborough returned to England, he found himself so coldly received, that he was very glad to go back again, and reside abroad, having by painful experience learnt the folly of "putting one's trust in princes."

During the war, the tories had again come into power ; and Harley, earl of Oxford, and St. John, lord Bolingbroke, were at the head of affairs. The queen, although much beloved for her kind and gentle disposition, yet suffered much annoyance from the incessant quarrels of the two parties of whig and tory, who could not "agree to differ," but lavished on each other the coarsest invectives, and really embittered the latter years of her life.

In this reign the important step was taken of uniting the kingdoms of England and Scotland. It is true they had been governed by the same monarch since the accession of James the first ; but the Scotch

had until now retained a parliament of their own, and much inconvenience had arisen from such an arrangement. In 1707, an act was passed which united the two nations, under the name of Great Britain ; and it was settled that the Scotch should send forty-five commoners and sixteen peers to represent them in the English parliament, instead of having one of their own. This measure encountered some opposition at first ; but the benefits arising from it have become so evident in the course of time, that all parties have long since agreed in its expediency, and instead of meeting, as in former ages, sword in hand, intent on each other's destruction, the English and Scots have laid aside every shade of hostility, and dwell together, as they ought to do, in peace and cordiality.

In the year following this happy event, prince George, the queen's husband, died from asthma. She nursed him with the most tender attention during his illness, and mourned deeply the loss of one whose amiable and unassuming disposition must have been a great comfort to her in the midst of the many cares and troubles which arose from their exalted station. In 1713, the electress Sophia died, and her son George became heir to the English crown. Soon after, the queen's health began to decline, and her illness was

much increased by the anxiety she endured from the dissensions of her ministers. On the 1st of August, 1714, she died, in the thirteenth year of her reign and the fiftieth of her age. She had not the brilliant qualities of queen Elizabeth ; and was better suited to a private life than to the high station she was called to fill; but her kind and indulgent disposition endeared her to her subjects, and she is generally known as “good queen Anne.” She gave a large sum annually out of her private fortune for the service of the state, and in particular instituted a fund for the relief of the poorer clergy, which still continues to benefit them, under the name of “Queen Anne’s Bounty.”

A number of celebrated men lived in this reign ; and foremost among them stands the name of sir Isaac Newton, the greatest philosopher who has ever existed ; and who was also rich in that knowledge which is “the beginning of wisdom,” for he was a good and humble believer in our blessed Lord. His discoveries in science were so wonderful that he might well have become proud, if pride could justly belong to any of the children of Adam, but his humility was deep and unfeigned. A friend one day complimenting him on his great acquirements, “Alas !” he replied, “I am but like a little child wandering by the sea-side. Now

and then I pick up a shining pebble or a lovely shell, but the great ocean of truth lies all undiscovered before me." The mildness and patience of this truly great man were as conspicuous as his humility. He had a little dog named Diamond, which was accidentally shut up one day in his study, on the table of which lay the manuscript of a work which had cost him years of laborious research to complete. The dog, leaping on the table, upset a lighted candle among the papers, and sir Isaac entered the room just in time to see the fruit of his labours entirely consumed; but he only said, "Oh, Diamond, Diamond! thou little knowest the mischief thou hast done!" Sir Isaac Newton was born at Woolstrop, in Lincolnshire, and used to study hard in the fields while keeping his father's sheep, till a gentleman, finding him thus engaged, induced some of his richer relations to give him a good education. He died in 1726.

Among other writers of the reign of queen Anne, were Mr. Addison and sir Richard Steele, who set on foot two magazines, called the "Tatler" and the "Spectator." These, the first periodical works published in England, were devoted to the improvement of society, the encouragement of education, and the inculcation of true religion. They are still to be



Sir Isaac Newton and his dog Diamond.

found in most libraries of any extent, and will probably always retain a place amongst our lighter literature. Mr. Addison was the author of two beautiful hymns, which must be familiar to most of my young readers;—“The spacious firmament on high,” and “The Lord my pasture shall prepare,”—poetic versions of Psalms xix. and xxiii.

Another writer of this period was Daniel Defoe, the author of, perhaps, the most popular story that has ever been written,—“The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe,” and which will, I doubt not, continue to be read long after many graver books are forgotten. This story was founded on the adventures of Alexander Selkirk, who passed some years on the uninhabited island of Juan Fernandez. You are perhaps familiar with Cowper’s verses, supposed to be spoken by Selkirk in his solitude, and beginning—

“I am monarch of all I survey.”

If you have not read them, you must ask dear mamma to show them to you in Cowper’s “Poems,” as they are too long for insertion here.

You have heard of sir Cloudesley Shovel, who commanded a fleet in the long war which took place in the reign of queen Anne. He* was the son of

* Mrs. Markham’s “History of England.”

very poor parents in Norfolk, and apprenticed to a cobbler ; but having a great passion for the sea, he ran away, and entered as cabin-boy on board a man-of-war. During the heat of an engagement, the admiral wanted to send some despatches to another ship, and young Cloudesley swam with them in his mouth, conveying them safely through the enemy's firing. He became noticed by the officers of the fleet in consequence of this exploit. In a short time he was made a lieutenant, and rose rapidly until he became an admiral, and was knighted. He greatly distinguished himself in the war, and was returning to England, in 1707, when his own vessel and three others were wrecked on the Scilly islands, and out of the four ships' crews, only one captain and twenty-four seamen were saved. Sir Cloudesley's body was found by some of the inhabitants, and buried in the sand, but was afterwards disinterred and removed to Westminster Abbey. There were other celebrated characters in the reign of queen Anne, but I will leave you to make acquaintance with them when you read larger books than this, as it is now time to proceed to the reign of the first king of the House of Hanover.





CHAPTER XXXV.

GEORGE THE FIRST—FROM 1714 TO 1727.

QUEEN ANNE was the last of the Stuarts. From her death to the reign of our present beloved queen Victoria, the throne of England has been occupied by the house of Hanover; but you will remember that *they* too derived their right to it through their connexion with the Stuarts, George the first being great-grandson of James the first. His mother, the electress Sophia, was daughter of the queen of Bohemia, the youngest child of James. George arrived at Greenwich on the 18th of September, 1714, and was received by many persons of high rank, among whom was the duke of Marlborough, lately returned to England, and whom the king treated with marked distinction during the remainder of his life; and this must have been a great consolation to the good old hero, after the neglect and injustice with which Anne had treated him. The duke died in 1722.

It is strange that George, although he had so long been heir-presumptive to the crown of this country,

had not learnt the language ; and, as you may suppose, the people never became much attached to a sovereign who could scarcely speak a word of English, and never took the trouble to make himself acquainted with the manners and customs of his subjects, but on all occasions preferred the Hanoverians.

In the latter part of Anne's reign she had a tory ministry, but George put himself entirely into the hands of the whigs, who showed a sadly vindictive spirit towards their late rivals. Harley, earl of Oxford, was imprisoned in the Tower, and kept there two years ; but the new ministry and the parliament quarrelled so fiercely as to what was to be done with him, that at length, without their coming to any decision at all, and without his ever having been tried, the earl was set free. Lords Ormond and Bolingbroke escaped to the continent and joined the Pretender, James Edward, son of James the second. They were then attainted, (or accused of treason,) and their names erased from the peerage ; so unjust will party-spirit render men who are strangers to the mild precepts of the Gospel !

The king's unpopularity, and these harsh dealings with the tories, were probably the cause of a strong feeling in favour of the Pretender. In Scotland, the

earl of Mar proclaimed him king, and raised his standard in the Highlands. In the north of England his party was led by Lord Derwentwater and Mr. Foster. They were soon joined by the Scottish lords Wintoun, Nithsdale, and Kenmuir. After an ineffectual attempt on Newcastle, they marched through Cumberland into Lancashire. Here they met the royal forces at Preston, and were defeated. The leaders were brought to trial ; lords Derwentwater, Kenmuir, and Nithsdale, were condemned to be beheaded ; a sentence which was executed on the two first, but Lord Nithsdale escaped through the affectionate contrivance of his wife. This escape is so well narrated by a lady,* to whose interesting history you have been more than once indebted in the course of Aunt Anne's, that I will transcribe, at length, her account of it. Having permission to visit her lord in the Tower, and to bring with her one friend at a time to take leave of him, before his intended execution, she took a Mrs. Mills and another lady in a coach, and left Mrs. Mills waiting in the carriage, while she and the other lady went into lord Nithsdale's apartment. This lady, who was of a slender shape,

* Mrs. Markham.

had on two suits of clothes and two riding-hoods. One of these suits she took off and left with lord Nithsdale, and then went back to the carriage, where she waited while Mrs. Mills paid *her* visit. Mrs. Mills then changed her own dress for that which the other lady had left, and returned to the coach, leaving the dress she had come in for lord Nithsdale. Being a large, stout woman, her clothes fitted him tolerably well; but lord Nithsdale being of a dark complexion, and she of a fair one, with yellow hair, some further contrivance was necessary. By the help of white and red paint, putting on a woman's wig of yellow hair, and painting his eyebrows yellow, he made a tolerable copy of good Mrs. Mills. When his disguise was completed, his wife, who had assisted him in dressing, conducted him out of the room, and in the hearing of the guards who stood at the door called him Betty, and told him to run quickly and send her maid to her. The guards, suspecting nothing, opened the gates for the supposed Betty. Thus lord Nithsdale got off from the prison. The countess's maid was waiting in the street, and conducted him to a place of safety. In the mean time the countess returned to the room that had been her lord's, and began to talk in a loud voice, sometimes imitating his, to make the guards on the

outside of the door believe they were conversing together. After some time she left the apartment, and her husband's escape was not immediately discovered. Lady Nithsdale then hastened to the place of her lord's concealment, a very small room in a house filled with all sorts of lodgers; where they were obliged to remain three days without stirring, lest they should be heard. At length their indefatigable friend Mrs. Mills contrived to obtain him a situation as a servant to the Venetian ambassador, who was going to leave England, and in this disguise lord Nithsdale safely reached Calais, and all danger was over; and truly, I think, the affection and ingenuity of his devoted wife richly deserved to be so rewarded; and I doubt not that both of them poured out the fervent gratitude of their hearts to Him who had thus given success to their efforts, and preserved them to each other.

Many persons of inferior note were executed for participating in this rebellion, and upwards of a thousand, shocking to relate, were banished to the American colonies, and made to serve as slaves.

On the very same day that the battle took place at Preston, another was fought at Dumblane, in Scotland, between the earl of Mar and the duke of Argyle, who commanded the king's forces; in which

Argyle had the advantage, and the Pretender, who had arrived in Scotland, was obliged to go back again to France. He had just before (Sept. 6, 1715) lost his best friend and protector, Louis the fourteenth, who was succeeded by his grandson, a child at that time ; and the duke of Orleans, who was made regent, was not friendly to the Pretender's claims. There were no more battles therefore on his own account, during this reign, though the Jacobites continued to plot in his favour.

Shortly after these events, war was declared against Spain, and in an engagement in the Mediterranean against the Spanish fleet, twenty-seven of their ships were destroyed by the English, under admiral Byng. Peace was soon afterwards restored.

Few other events of importance took place in this reign. The Septennial Bill was passed. Before this parliaments were summoned for three years only. But the country being in a disturbed state, it was thought that, if a general election took place, there would be too many members returned who would be in the Pretender's interest ; consequently an Act was passed by which the session lasts seven years ; the law remaining the same in our time. Not that the parliament often sits for that period. It may be at any time

dissolved by the sovereign, and seldom remains assembled for more than six years ; but should it extend to its full legal duration of seven, there *must* then be a new one.

The year 1720 was distinguished by the memorable South-Sea Bubble, as it was called ; a speculation set on foot by sir John Blunt. It may be rather difficult to make my young friends understand this. William the third, you will remember, was at war during the greatest part of his reign ; and as he required immense sums of money to defray the expense of it, the parliament obtained it for him by means of loans. He borrowed most of this money from a number of merchants who traded with the South Sea islands. This company proposed to the government to pay off all the debts due to other parties, and so become the sole national creditors. The government was to pay a lower rate of interest than before ; and in order to raise the sum necessary to fulfil this promise, a subscription was to be entered into for the purpose of carrying on a new kind of trade in the South Sea, of which the most extravagant expectations were entertained. The whole country seemed to run mad about this scheme. Thousands risked their whole fortunes in it, and shares were very quickly sold for ten times

as much as their possessors had given for them. The spirit of gambling became universal, and people plunged into the most reckless extravagance on the faith of the great riches they thought themselves sure of; but just when the excitement was at its height, the bubble broke; in other words, it was found to be a mere swindling scheme of some unprincipled speculating men, and numbers were reduced to absolute ruin. It is said, that "He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent;" and historians assert that irreligion, extravagance, and folly, during the time this scheme lasted, increased prodigiously in the nation, to the grief of the wiser and more sober-minded of the people. A bad example was set by the court. Sir Robert Walpole was prime minister during the greater part of this reign; and although a man of first-rate talent, he has been accused of using bribery to carry out his measures. Others have said that he was *obliged* to do so in self-defence, because the bribery carried on in the court was so notorious that he had no chance of success without it. But wrong on one side can never be a justification of it on another, and shining talents will but serve to make more conspicuous any departure from integrity in their possessor :

“ Not florid prose, nor honied lies of rhyme,
Can blazon evil deeds, or consecrate a crime.”

It is rather amusing to read of sir Robert's conversations with his royal master. The king (as I mentioned before) was unable to speak English, while his minister was equally ignorant of French and German; so they were obliged to hold all their conversations in Latin, and even in this neither of them was well versed, so that sir Robert used to say, in jest, he governed England, during this reign, with bad Latin.

George the first had married, when young, the princess Sophia Dorothea of Zell, and had two children; George Augustus, who succeeded him, and a daughter, married to Frederick William, king of Prussia. On a charge, generally believed to have been false, king George had imprisoned his wife in the castle of Ahlden; and she was never brought to trial, or suffered to have any opportunity of proving her innocence, but kept in confinement till her death, which occurred only a few months before that of her husband, a period of nearly forty years. There is no earthly affection so strong as the love of a mother for her children, and nothing can palliate this injustice and cruelty on the part of the king. Think how sad

for the poor mother to have passed month after month, year after year, pining to see the faces of her little ones in vain ; not allowed to train their young minds to habits of virtue and godliness ; nor to know if others had faithfully fulfilled the task denied to her.

There was but one alleviation to her sorrow ;—she could *pray* for her children, and commend them to the watchful guidance of that heavenly Friend who never yet left unheard the prayer of a mother for the children He has given her. The prince of Wales, who was much attached to his mother, earnestly begged to be allowed to see her, but in vain. He even swam his horse across the moat of the castle at Ahlden, in the hope of being able to make his way into it, but was discovered by the governor, and compelled to go back without one look at the face so dear to him ; a piece of hard-heartedness on the part of the governor Aunt Anne cannot at all comprehend. Let us trust that mother and children are now re-united, never again to part.

The king, who preferred Hanover to England, was in the habit of making occasional visits to that place. In 1727, while on his way thither, he was taken ill at Delden, a small German town, and was advised to rest

there and have medical aid ; but he had set his heart on reaching Osnaburg, of which place his brother was bishop. His illness increased, so that his attendants became much alarmed. Still, although scarcely able to speak, he repeated "Osnaburg !" but when the carriage reached the palace, it was found that he was already dead. This occurred June 11, 1727, in the sixty-eighth year of his age, and the thirteenth of his reign. There is something very saddening in reading of George's exclusive anxiety to reach an earthly abode, when he was thus on the very threshold of eternity, to which we do not learn that he gave a thought.

On the whole, this is a dull, uninteresting reign, as I fear my young readers will have found it. Among the discoveries of this period, the Aurora Borealis, or northern lights, a brilliant illumination which sometimes appears in the sky in cold weather, was first observed ; and inoculation was introduced by lady Mary Wortley Montague, who had observed its efficacy when travelling in Turkey. It consists in giving a person a mild kind of small-pox, in order to prevent the liability to a severer attack afterwards. It met with the most violent opposition at first ; for people thought it was tempting Providence to give their chil-

dren an illness ; and although lady Mary showed its harmlessness by practising on her own child, she was actually hooted in the streets, as if she had done some wicked thing. But in time this opposition died away, when they saw what a safeguard it was against a disease which till then had annually made the most fearful ravages, and been dreaded accordingly ; and inoculation came into general use, until it was superseded by Dr. Jenner's discovery of vaccination, which is much safer. This is one of the many advantages to mankind acquired by habits of observation. Dr. Jenner, who was a country practitioner, observed that cows were subject to a disease called cow-pox, and that the milkmaids caught this eruption from them, and were then no longer liable to catch the small-pox. Pursuing the investigation, he found, by experiment, that he could convey the eruption from the cow to the human being by means of a lancet, and so secure them *generally* from having the small-pox at all, while he avoided the evil of giving even a slight attack. He called it vaccination, from *vacca*, the Latin for cow. The worthy doctor was much laughed at for his discovery at first ; but he stood his ground manfully, and now its utility is so universally acknowledged, that it is quite a matter of course to have a baby

vaccinated as soon as possible. I have nothing more to tell you of the reign of George the first, but that the India-House was built while he occupied the throne, for the transaction of business connected with the East India Company.





CHAPTER XXXVI.

GEORGE THE SECOND—FROM 1727 TO 1760.

GEORGE THE SECOND was forty years old when he came to the throne. The people of England were more disposed to like him than his father, because he spoke English and had lived much among them; nevertheless he does not seem to have been very popular. He was reserved and cold in manner, and yet both violent and obstinate in temper; a disposition which led to frequent and disgraceful quarrels between him and his eldest son Frederic, prince of Wales, and from which even his beautiful and excellent queen, Caroline of Anspach, occasionally suffered, although he sincerely loved and respected her. Aunt Anne has so often, in the course of this little work, pointed out the evils attendant on the want of habitual government of the temper, that she might perhaps have passed this case over without remark, had she not lately met with an observation on the subject, by an Italian writer,* which she thinks worthy of remem-

* Manzoni.

brance. He says that, "Those who give way to passion are guilty, not only of their own sin, but also of that to which they may provoke others who suffer from it;"—a very serious consideration, which should make young people especially careful to avoid falling into this fault.

George the second certainly behaved ill to his son ; he compelled him, in the first place, to remain at Hanover until he was twenty-one, although, as heir-presumptive to the throne, he should have been brought up in England, among his future subjects. When he did come over, he was made very unhappy by his father's unkindness. This was the more to be deplored because, in one instance in particular, the prince gave up his dearest wish to his sense of filial duty. Although deeply attached to his cousin, the princess of Prussia, he consented to marry another lady, the princess of Saxe-Gotha, whom his father preferred. I am happy to tell you that he was rewarded for his obedience by finding her an excellent wife, who was devoted to him, and did her best to make him happy, so that he could not help loving her dearly. Afterwards, when they had a little son, they named him George, hoping that the king would be pleased ; but it does not seem to have made any im-

pression on him, and the poor prince continued in disgrace. I think this is the first instance I have had to relate to you of a father devoid of affection for his son ;—it is indeed a very rare case, and as lamentable as it is rare ;—and perhaps George the second really did, in the bottom of his heart, love the prince ; but from long indulgence in a harsh, suspicious temper, had rendered himself incapable of feeling those “gentle charities” (as the poet calls them) which are required to make domestic life happy. His strange fancy, too, of having his son educated away from home, at Hanover, must have had a tendency to shake the affection naturally subsisting between father and son.

The first event of importance in this reign was a riot at Edinburgh. It arose in this way : a noted highway robber was ordered to be hanged at Edinburgh, and a captain Porteous had to superintend the execution. The mob, having some favour to the robber, began to throw stones at the soldiers appointed to guard him ; and Porteous, without orders, fired on them, killed five persons and wounded several more. As he had done this without authority, he was tried for murder and condemned to die ; but meanwhile, as it appeared he had received great provoca-

tion, and that the stones which had been thrown were of immense size, queen Caroline (who was acting as regent during a visit of the king to Hanover) sent a respite of six weeks, to give time for further inquiry. As soon as this was known, the mob, thinking that Porteous would be pardoned, became much enraged, and determined to take upon themselves to punish him. In immense numbers they went to the Tolbooth, or prison where he was confined, and tried to break open the doors. These, being very strong, for a length of time resisted their efforts. But they set fire to them, and having thus effected an entrance, they set free all the prisoners except captain Porteous, whom they took away, and hanged near the usual place of execution.

This was a very lawless proceeding, and seems surprising to us who live in quieter times. But, at the period of which I am writing, there was a very great disregard shown to the laws. Highway robbery had become so common that it was not safe to travel without arms and several attendants. Even the sons of noblemen and gentlemen of property often turned highwaymen, under the strange idea that it was a very spirited and heroic life; and the now safe and pleasant neighbourhoods of Blackheath, Hounslow

Heath, Highgate, Finchley, &c., were then dangerous to pass through. It was quite a usual thing then for gentlemen, before starting on a long journey, to make their wills, and have prayers offered up on their behalf in their parish church, so great were the dangers they had to encounter. And only think how anxious their wives and children must have been during their absence ! Indeed, dear children, we have much to be thankful for, that we live in times when the laws are so well observed, and the life of the humblest subject is protected.

In those days very insufficient attention was paid to such affairs. This was to be accounted for, partly by the fact that all our rulers, from the time of Charles the first to the reign with which we are now occupied, were continually engaged in wars, either civil or foreign, which left little time for the regulation of laws so nearly concerning the comfort and the welfare of private individuals. The people, too, from such constant fightings, had contracted false notions of glory, which they thought was to be obtained only by bloodshed, swearing, and drinking ! It is lamentable to read of the state of society at this time. It was thought a fine, manly thing for gentlemen of the highest rank to drink many bottles of wine after

dinner, to sit up all night gambling, until many a lonely wife's heart was broken by seeing herself and her children left penniless through the wicked and heartless folly of the husband and father. That such vices are still practised by some is much to be deplored ; but they are now the exception to a better rule, and we may rejoice to find many of our nobility shewing, by their conduct and conversation, that the Bible is their rule of life, and our blessed Lord and Saviour their example.

But to return to the events of George the second's reign. In 1737, queen Caroline died, to the deep regret of the king. On her death-bed she begged him never to part with sir Robert Walpole, who was as much his favourite as he had been his father's, and whom the queen greatly respected. She had been an excellent wife and mother, and a true Christian. She encouraged the arts and literature, for which the king had no taste, and took great pleasure in conversing with men of learning and piety. The dying queen sent her blessing to the prince of Wales, but did not ask to see him, from the fear of irritating his father. The king could never meet sir Robert Walpole for a long time after her death, without bursting into tears.

In 1739 a war broke out with Spain, occasioned by the cruelties of the Spanish merchants in South America, towards the English traders. In the course of this war, commodore Anson made his celebrated voyage round the world. He was absent from England nearly four years ; and enriched his native land with the natural productions of many other countries. From the island of Juan Fernandez he brought the Anson apricot, so named after him ; and many other beautiful fruits and flowers from the South Sea islands. About this period sir Robert Walpole retired from the ministry, and was created earl of Orford.

In 1745, the young Pretender, Charles Edward, grandson of James the second, made an effort to wrest the crown from the reigning monarch. Assisted by France with money and promises, he landed in Scotland, where he was joined by some Highland chieftains and their clans. The rebels advanced towards Edinburgh, which they entered without opposition, and Charles Edward proclaimed his father king, and himself regent. He defeated sir John Cope at Preston-Pans, and then marched into England ; but finding the bulk of the nation faithful to the Hanoverian family, he thought it more prudent

to return to Scotland. The duke of Cumberland followed at the head of 14,000 men, and the Pretender was totally defeated at Culloden. It is to be lamented that the duke of Cumberland stained his victory by the greatest cruelty to the poor Highlanders, laying waste a circuit of fifty miles, so that neither house, nor cattle, nor human creature was to be seen. The leaders of the rebellion were punished with the utmost severity. The earl of Kilmarnock, lords Lovat and Balmerino, and Mr. Radcliffe, brother to the lord Derwentwater who lost his life in the cause of the old Pretender, were all executed. They were the last persons who were beheaded in this country.

Charles Edward, after wandering about five months in various disguises, during which time he was compelled to trust in many very poor people, all of whom were true to him, although a reward of £30,000 was offered for his apprehension, at length escaped to France. This was the last attempt of the Stuarts to regain possession of the English throne.

In 1755, a long war, called the "seven years' war," broke out between England and France, which was carried on partly in America, and partly on the continent of Europe. There is little of interest to

relate about it, but the death of general Wolfe at the siege of Quebec. When mortally wounded, and lying on the ground, an officer who supported him, exclaimed, "They run ! they run !"

"Who run ?" said Wolfe.

"The French," replied the officer.

"What !" said the dying man, "do the cowards run already ? Then I die happy !"

And this, my dear children, is called the *glorious* death of a soldier. How much more so that of the humblest Christian, who, clothed in the righteousness of Christ, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, glorifies God by a consistent life on earth, and at his death enters into the joy of his Lord !

Mr. Pitt, afterwards lord Chatham, began his political career in this reign, and by the blessing of the Almighty on his wise administration, the war was generally favourable to the English. It was not concluded at the death of the king, which took place very suddenly at Kensington. He rose in his usual health on the 25th of October, 1760, and was preparing for a walk, when he fell down in an apoplectic fit, and expired, in the seventy-seventh year of his age, and the thirty-fourth of his reign. His eldest son Frederic, prince of Wales, had died before him,

he was therefore succeeded by his grandson, George the third, then in his twenty-third year.

I do not find any useful inventions or discoveries attributed to this period, but many public improvements in London were accomplished. Blackfriars Bridge was built; the British Museum, and the Foundling Hospital established. The latter is intended for the reception of children deserted by their parents. It is very sad to think that such should ever be the case, and, God be praised, it is not common, though the possibility of it is implied in the holy Scriptures: "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, *she may forget*, yet will I not forget thee." A merciful and blessed promise to such desolate little ones, who, deserted by their natural protectors, are yet watched over by the all-seeing eye of a heavenly Father. "When my father and my mother forsake me, the Lord taketh me up."





CHAPTER XXXVII.

GEORGE THE THIRD—FROM 1760 TO 1820.

I HAVE now to relate to you the history of the longest reign of any of our English kings,—that of George the third, who might justly be called, “the father of his people.” He had been educated by his mother, and his piety, and strict integrity, reflected the greatest credit on her early training.

Errors of judgment may occasionally have been imputed to him, but not a single stain rests upon his private character, which was exemplary in all the relations of husband, son, and father. The Bible was his rule of life, and he was scrupulously exact in the observance of all the means of grace, while his humility was so unfeigned, that, on one occasion, when a clergyman had praised him very much in a sermon, the king sent for him, and desired him to abstain from such flattery in future, as he went to church to hear *God's* praises, and not his own. George the third married, soon after his accession, the princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg Strelitz, an excellent woman,

who became the mother of a great many children, one of whom, Edward, duke of Kent, was the father of our beloved queen Victoria.

The war with France was still carried on vigorously. Mr. Pitt, who was prime minister, foreseeing that a war with Spain also would become inevitable, advised that the first blow should be struck at once, instead of making peace with France. Finding his advice disregarded, he resigned his office, and was created earl of Chatham. He was succeeded by lord Bute. After all, the war with Spain was commenced, and England acquired many rich possessions in its course. Some of the West Indian Islands were taken from France; and the Havannah, in Cuba, and the Philippine Islands from Spain. At length peace was made in 1763, Canada and the Floridas were ceded to Great Britain, and the British power was much extended in the East Indies. The Havannah, however, was restored to Spain.

The East India Company was originally established in the reign of queen Elizabeth; when a few English merchants obtained a charter to open a trade with that country, then principally engrossed by the Portuguese. In the course of time, the possessions of the Company increased into such importance as to

become involved in the continental wars of England. The French especially, endeavoured to wrest them from us, and to extend their own dominions in India.

Lord Clive had successfully resisted their encroachments, and made so many new acquisitions of territory, that it was become too gigantic an empire to be left solely in the hands of the Company. It was thought necessary to send out a viceroy, who, under the title of governor-general of India, represents the royal authority. Warren Hastings was the first who bore this title. He was afterwards impeached on a charge of cruelty and oppression in his government; but after a long trial, which gave rise to some of the most dazzling eloquence that ever woke the echoes of the houses of parliament, he was acquitted.

You cannot but be struck, my dear children, with the gradual changes that have occurred in the destinies of our country in the course of ages. As it has been well remarked by a modern writer, "The history of England, instead of being as formerly the narrative of petty struggles between the feudal sovereign and his powerful vassals, now embraced the transactions of mighty empires in the east and west, with which the interests of British commerce and British ascendancy were closely interwoven." In the great empire

of India alone, millions of native subjects are living beneath the sway and protection of a British viceroy, and immense wealth is derived to our country from the productions and manufactures of that torrid clime. But we should remember, that it is not to increase our wealth alone that God has permitted so great an extension of our dominion among foreign nations. Wherever the British flag is planted there also should the Gospel be preached. Many missionaries have gone out, Bible in hand, on this labour of love; and in various parts of India, God has blessed their exertions to the turning of many poor heathens from the darkness of idolatry to the light of the Sun of Righteousness. But, alas! these are but as drops in the ocean, compared with the numbers yet unconverted, and offering up a horrid worship to false gods, whose attributes should rather entitle them to be called *devils*. Even in Calcutta, the very seat of British government, the streets are polluted by idolatrous processions, and the air too often resounds with the discordant music of some heathen rite, and the melancholy chant which calls the scarcely less deluded followers of Mahomet to the worship of their false prophet. From a residence of some years in that city, Aunt Anne can add her testimony to the truth

of this sad statement, and confirm the sorrowful assertion of one * of the most devoted of the missionaries to that benighted country, that even Christians find it difficult to maintain the spirituality of their faith uncontaminated amidst the universal depravity which there surrounds them. But it is thought by the most observant, that the reign of idolatry is drawing to a close in India, and that the blessed time approaches when "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." O may all who have it in their power contribute to so great an end! Every child who has a little pocket-money can offer its mite; and he who has no money can give his prayers. "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few; pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into the harvest."

"What, though the spicy breezes
Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle,
Where every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile;
In vain with lavish kindness
The gifts of God are strown;—
The heathen, in his blindness,
Bows down to wood and stone.

* Leupolt.

Shall we, whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high—
Shall we to men benighted
The lamp of life deny?
Salvation! O, salvation!
The joyful sound proclaim,
Till each remotest nation
Has learnt Messiah's name!"

I cannot attempt, my dear children, to give you a regular history of this long reign of George the third, but must confine myself to some account of such of the events which occurred in it as, I hope, may interest you.

In 1770, lord North became prime minister of England, and retained that situation for twelve years. During his administration occurred the American war. You doubtless remember that, during many reigns, but more especially in the time of the Commonwealth, and in that of Charles the second, a great many emigrants from this country settled in North America, and formed colonies there, under the protection of the English government. They had hitherto enjoyed a freedom from all taxation; but as the mother-country had been heavily burdened by the expenses of the long continental war, as well as that in America, for the protection of the colonies, it was

thought expedient now to lay part of the burden upon them, in order to afford some relief to the English. But this determination occasioned the most violent outcry, and a grievous war was the consequence, between England and North America, which lasted from 1775 to 1783, when the independence of the American United States was acknowledged, to the great sorrow of the king. But time has proved the loss, which was then considered so deplorable, to be in reality of little importance to our country.

General Washington was commander-in-chief of the colonial forces, while lords Howe and Cornwallis were the leaders on the side of England. In 1778 the French took the part of America, and this so increased the difficulties of the undertaking, that it was proposed to terminate the contest by peace; and it is perhaps to be lamented that this resolution was not followed up at that time, as it would have saved much expense of life and money. But it seems to have been thought that the loss of the colonies would ensure the ruin of the mother-country, and, among others, the great lord Chatham held this opinion; and although, at this time, in bad health, he caused himself to be carried to the House of Lords, to raise his voice once more against the

measure he so dreaded, but was seized with a fit as he rose to express his opinions, and expired a few days after.

In 1779, the Spaniards also joined the Americans against us, and in the contest with the three nations, admiral Rodney and general Elliot greatly distinguished themselves. You have heard, I dare say, of Captain Cook, the celebrated navigator, who made three voyages round the world ; and added much to the geographical and mathematical knowledge of the country. It was at this time (1779) that he was murdered by the savages of Owhyhee, an island in the Pacific Ocean. You will derive much pleasure from reading an account of his voyages, which came to so melancholy a termination.

In 1780, the Gordon riots took place. They were excited by lord George Gordon, because the parliament had shewn a disposition to annul some of the heaviest penalties against the Roman Catholics. He made the most seditious speeches to the mob, and so inflamed their passions, that, with a furious cry of "No Popery !" they committed terrible excesses in the metropolis ; pulled down all the Romanist chapels in London, set fire to the prisons of Newgate, [the Fleet, and the King's Bench, and to many private

houses ; among others, that of lord Mansfield, whose library was completely destroyed, with all his own valuable manuscripts ; an irreparable loss. The mob were quelled at length by the troops, and lord George Gordon committed to the Tower.

In 1783, the celebrated William Pitt, son of lord Chatham, was made prime minister, at the early age of twenty-three. His extraordinary talents, energy, and integrity, endeared him to the country, and during the remainder of his life, although for a short time out of office, he never lost the confidence which he thus early obtained.

About 1784, Sunday-schools were first established by Mr. Raikes, at Gloucester, for the instruction in the truths of religion, of the children of the poor. *Now* there is scarcely a village in the whole country without one ; and far more glorious to the nation is this universal effort to spread the knowledge of the Gospel, than its most splendid victories by sea or land. Indeed, with the growing light of Christianity, the taste for war is greatly decreased ; and national difficulties are now settled by negotiation, which formerly would have led to bloodshed and misery. I trust that this feeling may grow amongst us, and that the time approaches when (as the prophet Micah

foretells) "People shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

In 1787, an attempt was made to assassinate the king, by a woman named Margaret Nicholson, who, while presenting a petition to him with one hand, aimed a blow at him with a knife she held in the other. George the third was as remarkable for his presence of mind as for his piety, and seeing the woman instantly seized by his attendants, he exclaimed, "Don't hurt the poor creature ; she must be mad." And so it proved, and she was confined for life in a lunatic asylum ; the king ordering that every kindness and indulgence should be shewn her consistent with her safe custody.

In the following year, the good king, who had been some little time ailing, was attacked with serious illness, which terminated in the temporary loss of his reason. As he was, of course, incapable of transacting business, it was necessary to appoint a regent, and the prince of Wales being now twenty-six years old, was the most proper person for the office. But while the parliament were discussing the amount of authority with which he ought to be entrusted, the king recovered, to the unfeigned joy of the nation.

On the 23rd of April, 1789, he went in state to St. Paul's cathedral, to return thanks for the mercy he had received. The building was crowded with people desirous of shewing their affectionate sympathy with their good monarch ; and several thousands of charity children raised their young voices in hymns and anthems of thanksgiving. The king was deeply affected, and said to some one near him, "Now I feel that I have indeed been ill." After this, by the advice of his medical attendants, he abstained for some time, as much as possible, from public business ; and passed this interval of leisure in retirement with his excellent queen, and his beloved children. And well it was that he enjoyed this opportunity of rest, for sadly troubled times were coming, and he needed to seek strength to meet them. The history of these unhappy years must be contained in another chapter.





CHAPTER XXXVIII.

GEORGE THE THIRD—(CONTINUED.)

THE last king of France I mentioned to you, was Louis the fourteenth, who endeavoured to place the Pretender on the English throne by force of arms. Now I have to tell you some events connected with the reign of his descendant, Louis the sixteenth ; a kind and amiable sovereign, but deficient in the energy and talent necessary to reform the many evils of the French constitution, which had gone on accumulating through many ages, until this unhappy king had to bear the punishment due to the errors of his predecessors.

The people had long been oppressed and burdened with heavy taxes, from which the nobles were entirely free ; and these latter passed their time in idleness, vice, and frivolity, utterly regardless of the wants and interests of those from whom they drew their wealth. We can then scarcely wonder that, goaded beyond endurance, the people at length rebelled, and a revolution took place, such as never before disgraced a

country since the world had been divided into nations. Crimes of the most horrible and revolting nature were of daily occurrence ; while religion was abolished from the land, and in its stead was set up a guide miscalled *reason*, but which in reality was *atheism*. Against the ministers of religion especially, was the blind fury of the populace directed. They were hanged, drowned, beheaded, with the reckless ferocity of savages. Fearful was the lesson given to the world of what the nature of man can become, when he has cast off the wholesome restraints of religion and virtue, and gives himself up to the unholy pursuit of sin. I shall not, my dear children, enter fully into the history of this terrible outbreak of iniquity, except in so far as it is connected with the reign of George the third ; but I cannot refrain from giving you one proof of the real folly of their boasted wisdom. It was decreed that the observance of the Sabbath was a superstition unworthy of the followers of reason ; but as no amount of reason will save men and animals from fatigue, and as occasional rest is therefore indispensable, these lawgivers who were so “wise in their own eyes,” made a law that every *tenth* day was to be observed as one of rest from labour. But now, mark the result.

It was found on trial that one day in ten was not sufficient for the purpose, and they were obliged to return to the arrangement made by a merciful God when He said by the mouth of His servant Moses, "Remember the *seventh* day, to keep it holy." Dear children, can there be a more striking proof that "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God?"

At length, after imprisoning, and treating with every indignity, the king and queen, with their children, and the king's sister, the pious and noble-minded princess Elizabeth, they consummated their guilt by causing Louis, and his amiable wife, Marie Antoinette, with their sister, to be beheaded. The two royal children were then kept in separate prisons. The princess was, after long confinement, set free, and went to some of her mother's relations at Vienna; but her brother, the poor little Dauphin, was treated with such cruelty and neglect, that his mind became affected, and then his health declined, and he died.

"The reign of terror," as it was justly called, lasted until the guilty nation grew weary of its own deeds of blood. France became a republic, and was governed nominally by three consuls, but in point of fact, by Napoleon Buonaparte, who had risen in the

army, and made himself so conspicuous by his military talents, and wonderful energy of character, that, like Oliver Cromwell in our own country, he at length possessed himself of the supreme power. But this is somewhat anticipating the order of events.

The whole continent had been alarmed by the horrors of the Revolution, and some kingdoms had taken up arms ; and at length it became evident that England must follow their example, and do her best to check the spread of those infidel principles which had wrought such awful devastation in France. In 1793 began a war which lasted, with but a very short intermission, for twenty years.

By land, the French were generally successful at first, but the superiority of the English at sea was fully established by the most brilliant victories under lords Howe and Bridport, and sir John Jervis, the latter of whom had, in 1797, with fifteen vessels, defeated a greatly superior Spanish fleet off Cape St. Vincent, for which service he was rewarded with the title of earl St. Vincent.

In 1798, a rebellion, which was principally excited by French agents, broke out in Ireland, which was not suppressed until many dreadful crimes had been committed, and many valuable lives lost.

On the first of August, in the same year, was fought the famous naval engagement, called the battle of Aboukir, because it took place in the bay of Aboukir, at the mouth of the Nile ; in which our brave admiral Nelson signally defeated the French, one of whose largest ships, L'Orient, was blown up. The French admiral, Casabianca, and his son, a boy of thirteen, were on board this ill-fated vessel. The youth had had some post assigned him by his father, with strict injunctions not to leave it without his express permission. The gallant boy stood his ground with unflinching courage during the engagement, till at length, the ship taking fire, the officers and crew quitted the vessel in boats, or by jumping overboard, and swimming till they were picked up by sailors (many of them English,) sent to their rescue. Young Casabianca was urged to attempt his escape also, but refused to leave his post without the permission of his father, who, unknown to his son, was lying below, mortally wounded. Terrified by the devouring flames, he shouted aloud, "Father, may I go?" But the dying admiral could no longer hear his son's voice, and in a few minutes, every living creature yet on board the burning L'Orient, was hurled into the air, and torn limb from limb by the explosion of

the powder-magazine ; while the thunder of the cannon on both sides became silenced, and English and French stood horror-stricken to watch the catastrophe. Should any of my young readers ever visit Greenwich Hospital, they may see, in the Painted Hall, a good picture of the battle of Aboukir, with the sailors belonging to the *L'Orient* struggling in the sea.

Nelson was made a peer, by the title of Baron Nelson of the Nile, for this great victory, which was of the utmost service to the country by frustrating some of Napoleon's favourite schemes. This ambitious commander thought by the conquest of Egypt and Syria, to open a way to India, and there attack our possessions ; but after another defeat at Acre, in Syria, under sir Sydney Smith, he left the army he was leading, and came to Paris, in 1799, where he was made chief consul, as I mentioned before.

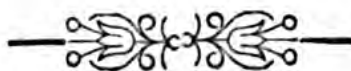
In the year 1800, a union was effected between England and Ireland, of the same kind as that which had been established with Scotland in the reign of Queen Anne ; that is, instead of having a parliament of their own at Dublin, the Irish were thenceforward to send twenty-eight peers, and 100 commoners, to that of England, or of the united kingdom of Great

Britain and Ireland, as it has been called from that time. In the following year, 1801, the army which Napoleon had left in Egypt, was defeated by sir Ralph Abercrombie, who was, unhappily, mortally wounded in the battle ; and about the same time lord Nelson won the tremendous battle of Copenhagen. Mr. Pitt now resigned his office, and Mr. Addington, afterwards lord Sidmouth, became prime minister ; and in the ensuing year had the happiness of accomplishing a peace with France, called the "Treaty of Amiens," from the place where it was signed. The news of this peace caused universal joy throughout the country. A resting-time was greatly needed ; for the people had grown weary of a war which drained the land of money, and consumed many valuable lives, without conferring solid advantage in return. But their rejoicing was but of short duration ; for Napoleon had only entered into this treaty to gain time ; and made so many obstacles to the fulfilment of its conditions, and displayed such a spirit of encroachment on the neighbouring countries, that in 1803, England was again compelled to take up arms, not to lay them down again until she had, after a terrible struggle, overthrown this scourge of Europe, and given peace to the whole Continent.

In 1804, Napoleon was proclaimed emperor of France. The same year was also marked by his threat of invading England; and he actually assembled a numerous flotilla of boats at Boulogne, where are still to be seen some of his batteries, and a triumphal column this boaster caused to be erected in commemoration of the invasion, which, after all, never took place; for the threat excited such zeal on the part of Mr. Addington's government, and such a universal spirit of loyalty and patriotism in the country, that Napoleon ventured not beyond this vain-glorious menace; though by this time, nearly the whole of Europe was crouching to the ambitious usurper, and England stood almost single-handed against him. In the course of this year Mr. Addington resigned the office of prime-minister, which was again conferred on Mr. Pitt.

The year 1805 was rendered memorable by the most brilliant naval victory with which God has ever blessed the arms of England. On the 21st of October lord Nelson encountered the united fleets of France and Spain, off Cape Trafalgar. He commanded twenty-seven ships of the line, while the enemy mustered thirty-three. Of these, nineteen were taken, and one destroyed; the French admiral, Villeneuve, was taken

prisoner ; and the victory was so complete as to decide beyond a doubt, the immense superiority of the English at sea ; and so effectually crippled the French navy as to incapacitate them from any further disputing the matter. But it was dearly purchased by the death of England's sailor hero, lord Nelson, who was mortally wounded by a shot aimed at him from the rigging of the Redoubtable, a French ship. He survived about three hours, just long enough to learn the complete success of his admirable tactics. Nelson's last signal to the fleet, on going into action, was, "England expects every man to do his duty ;" an expectation nobly realised on this occasion, not only by himself, but by every one of his devoted followers. His body was brought to London, and publicly interred in St. Paul's cathedral, on the 9th of January, 1806. On the 23rd of the same month Mr. Pitt died, and was succeeded in his office by his great political rival, Mr. Fox, who, however, held the reins of government but a very short time, as he also died on the 13th of September following ; and these two distinguished statesmen now rest side by side in Westminster Abbey.





CHAPTER XXXIX.

GEORGE THE THIRD (CONCLUDED).

WE must now return to Napoleon. The contest henceforth became of an entirely military nature. Austria, Russia, Prussia, Italy, and Naples, had submitted to the conqueror, and he now turned his attention to Spain and Portugal. In 1807, Junot, one of his generals, drove the Portuguese royal family to take refuge in the Brazils; and then, by an act of the basest treachery, Napoleon made himself master of Spain. Having, under professions of friendship, induced the king of that country, and his son, prince Ferdinand, to meet him at Bayonne, he sent them both prisoners to Italy, and caused his brother, Joseph Buonaparte, to be crowned in Spain. Another brother, Louis, he made king of Holland; and the Pope himself was a prisoner in France. It was evident that nothing but universal dominion would satisfy the gigantic ambition of this "enemy of mankind"; but his treacherous dealing with the Spanish king led eventually to his own ruin. Spain revolted

against him, and Joseph was far too weak a king to reconcile his new subjects to his usurped authority.

Now I am going to introduce you, my dear children, to the greatest general who has ever commanded British troops ;—the duke of Wellington, the liberator of Europe,—and proud may every Englishman feel at the mention of his name. At the time of which I am writing he was sir Arthur Wellesley. He had already greatly distinguished himself in India, and was, in 1808, sent into Spain with an army, to humble the power of Napoleon. It has been said that great occasions call forth great men—talents which might have lain inactive in quiet times, spring up and become conspicuous, when strong necessity gives a motive, and an opportunity for their exertion. “This is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.” Wellington (for I prefer to call him by the name his victories have won for him) was eminently fitted for the arduous task assigned him. His strength of constitution, steadiness of nerve, and unflinching courage, have procured him the title of the Iron Duke ; his perseverance and energy enabled him to carry out any plan which he had once determined to be practicable ; as he once said, when an obstacle was started to the fulfilment of one of his commands, “If it will not do

one way, we must try another ; for I never in my life gave up anything I once undertook." His unaffected simplicity of character (an especial mark of a truly great mind) preserved him from becoming puffed up and conceited by the praises which were lavished on him by those who had been delivered from tyranny and oppression by his victories. "The events of war are in the hands of Providence," was his reply to a public address of congratulation and thanks ;*—a reply which cannot fail to remind us of David's Psalm, beginning, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give the glory." What, indeed, can human talent and strength accomplish, without the blessing of the Lord of Hosts ?

Sir Arthur Wellesley defeated Junot at Vimeira ; and in the same year, 1808, the gallant sir John Moore gained a battle at Corunna, over Marshal Soult, but lost his own life in the engagement ; and at night, when all was quiet, his soldiers dug a grave upon the ramparts, and buried him there, wrapped in his military cloak.

In 1809, sir Arthur Wellesley was victorious at Talavera, and was for this service created viscount

* Captain Sherer's "Military Memoirs of the Duke of Wellington."

Wellington of Talavera. At the end of this year, Napoleon took the extraordinary step of divorcing himself from his amiable and faithful wife, the empress Josephine, to gratify his ambition by a royal alliance. In three months after, he married Marie Louise, daughter of the emperor of Austria, who disgraced himself by giving her in marriage to the usurper.

In 1810, lord Wellington defeated Soult at Albuera, and fought his way to Madrid, but was obliged again to abandon that city, and remain for a time in Portugal. In the month of November, in the same year, the good old king George was again attacked by his mental malady, and never more recovered his reason. The great anxiety he had so long endured, combined with the sorrow occasioned him by the death of his tenderly beloved daughter, the princess Amelia, were the causes of this sad affliction: and the excellent sovereign whose noble spirit had roused the nation to resist the destructive ambition of Napoleon, was unconscious of the triumph of his armies, not a gleam of reason ever again visiting his darkened mind. For some years before this, he had become totally blind, and it was a touching sight to behold the venerable monarch feeling his way with a stick, and closely attended by some of his children, who carefully

guarded his steps from danger. But after his last mental attack, the queen, with proper delicacy, and good feeling, never allowed him to be seen, except by the members of his own family. He was not, however, forgotten by his people, who truly loved their "good old king," and remembered him in their prayers.

George, prince of Wales, was made regent, and retained that office during the remainder of his father's life. No change was made by him in the administration of government. Mr. Perceval, who had succeeded Mr. Fox as prime-minister, continued in office till 1812, when he was shot by a man named Bellingham, from some motive of private revenge. Lord Liverpool succeeded him, and shared the chief power with lord Castlereagh.

The successful career of Napoleon was now drawing to a close. Some time before, he had made a treaty with the emperor of Russia, in which they had agreed to divide the dominion of Europe between them ; but they could not long agree in their "unholy compact," as it has well been called ; and a quarrel arose between them, which terminated in war. Napoleon led an army of 500,000 men into Russia, and they made their way as far as Moscow, the ancient

capital of the Russian empire. But, instead of risking a battle, the emperor Alexander wisely pursued the course of retreating before his enemy ; thus, when they reached Moscow, they found it deserted by its inhabitants, with the exception of a few men, who set the city on fire, and so totally destroyed it, as to leave no shelter for the French troops, who had calculated on passing there the severe northern winter, which had now set in with even unusual inclemency, and famine stared them in the face. That mighty Voice had spoken, which says to the stormy sea, " Thus far shalt thou go, and no further !"

The most disastrous retreat recorded in history, began. Worn out by cold and hunger, the road was strewn with the dead bodies of men and horses, and when they crossed the Russian frontier again, on their homeward march, only fifty thousand men were found to have survived its hardships and privations, leaving 450,000 of their companions a prey to wolves and foxes !

As some relief to this long narrative of war, contained in the last two chapters, I am glad to have it in my power to relate an instance of devoted, unselfish attachment between an officer and his soldiers, which took place at this time. During the retreat

from Moscow, prince Emilius of Hesse Darmstadt, worn out with fatigue, cold, and privation, lay down to rest in a deserted, roofless hut, by the road-side. With no defence against such an inclement season, it was certain death to sleep under such circumstances ; but the prince's strength was quite spent, and he could go no further. After many hours of refreshing sleep, he awoke, astonished to find himself not only living, but warm. His faithful followers had saved his life at the expense of their own ; for they had stripped off their clothes, and thrown them over their beloved commander as he slept. How his heart must have swelled with mingled sorrow and gratitude on discovering so fatal a proof of the devoted affection of these noble-minded soldiers ! Such incidents as these are needed to brighten the gloomy horrors of war.

Roused from their forced submission to the conqueror, the other nations of Europe now entered into an alliance against him. Russia, Prussia, Austria, and Sweden, combined with England to crush the long-dreaded foe, who had hitherto been faced by England and Spain alone. In 1813, lord Wellington drove the French from that country, and in 1814, gained another victory at Toulouse, in France. In

the same year the allies entered Paris in triumph, and Napoleon signed his abdication at Fontainebleau. The Bourbons were restored to the French throne, from which they had been so long excluded ; and as the son of Louis the sixteenth had died under the cruel treatment of his gaolers, his father's brother, who had for some years resided in England, was made king by the title of Louis the eighteenth.

It was agreed by the allies that Napoleon should retain the title of Emperor, and reside in the island of Elba, in the Mediterranean Sea ; and Europe began to think with hope and joy, that peace might be her happy lot once more. But not many months had passed over his head before this caged tiger began to look with a restless eye towards the scene of his former triumphs ; and while the allies were rejoicing in what they believed to be the termination of the war, early in 1815, Napoleon electrified them all by escaping from his petty sovereignty, and marching at once to Paris. The French troops sent to oppose him, mounted the tricoloured cockade, and joined his eagle standard. The Bourbons fled before him, and Napoleon resumed his government of France, as if nothing had happened to interrupt it.

But Europe had suffered too much from his un-

principled and boundless ambition to allow this state of affairs to continue. On the eighteenth of June, 1815, the allies, under the command of the duke of Wellington, after a terrible contest, which lasted the whole day, completely routed the French at the famous battle of Waterloo, in Belgium, and Napoleon was obliged to fly ; and seeing no prospect of retrieving his affairs, he surrendered to England, and embarked on board the Bellerophon. Warned by the late events of the danger of entrusting him with too much liberty, the government determined on sending him to St. Helena, where he could be much more securely guarded than at Elba, and where he remained till his death, in May 1821. Louis the eighteenth was once more restored to his throne, and a universal peace was concluded, which, by God's blessing, has lasted to our own time ; and Aunt Anne would gladly hope that England may never again be compelled to take the sword, and send forth her sons to defend even a good cause ; and trusts her young readers will join earnestly in the prayer of our beautiful Liturgy, " Give peace in our time, O Lord ; for there is none other that fighteth for us, but only Thou, O God." When they are old enough to understand more fully how great a calamity is war,



Napoleon at St. Helena.

they will cordially enter into the feeling of the good lord Sidmouth, who said, when he was a very old man, "I used to think all the sufferings of war lost in its glory ; *now* I consider all its glory lost in its sufferings." *

The good old king's darkened reason did not admit of his sharing in the universal joy of this happy termination of so protracted a war. The prince of Wales conducted the affairs of government in his father's name ; but little occurred in this reign, after 1815, which would interest you, my dear children.

In 1817, the princess Charlotte, the only child of the prince of Wales, died, to the deep regret of the people, to whom she had endeared herself by her amiable disposition. In 1818, the excellent queen died, in her seventy-fifth year, and in 1820, Edward, duke of Kent, the father of our beloved queen Victoria, followed his mother to the grave. But of all these bereavements was the venerable king unconscious, until, on the 29th of January, 1820, he too died, and we trust, was united for ever to so many who had gone before him to a happier world. Of him it may be said with truth, that no monarch

* *Life of lord Sidmouth.* By the dean of Norwich.

was ever so well, or so deservedly, beloved and respected. His sincere piety, and unvarying integrity have been admitted by every one, and were the source of that coolness and intrepidity in moments of danger which equally distinguished him. More than once his life was attempted, and on each occasion, his majesty was observed to be the most composed person present. "One * is *supposing* that, and another is *proposing* this, forgetting that there is One above every thing, and on whom alone we depend, who *disposes* of all things," was his remark on one of these occasions ; and, to one whose heart was so habitually stayed upon his Maker and Redeemer, it could be of little real importance whether he were summoned from the world by the sudden blow of an assassin, or by the more gradual decay of age and infirmity.

"During his long illness," continues the last writer I have quoted from, "everything that could be thought of was done to make his situation comfortable. He inhabited a long range of apartments in Windsor Castle, and passed his time chiefly in roving from room to room, occasionally playing a few bars of Handel's music on the pianos and harpsichords that were placed in them.

• Mrs. Markham.

Sometimes he would hold conversations with imaginary persons ; at others, he would suppose himself the inhabitant of another world, and would converse with angels of what he imagined the queen and his children were doing on earth. His piety was continually gleaming through all his wanderings," and he would often engage in solemn prayer to Him, by whose mysterious wisdom he had been deprived of reason, but who still could retain the pious spirit of His aged servant in communion with Himself. At the time of his death, George the third was in the eighty-second year of his age, and the sixtieth of his reign.

I have not attempted to give you anything like a full account of this eventful period of our history. So many improvements and inventions took place, that I must refer you to books descriptive of them for information respecting them. The discovery of the gigantic powers of steam alone, has led to so many, and such wonderful changes in machinery, steam-boats, railroads, &c., &c., as would amply fill a large volume. But one measure carried out in this reign I must allude to : I mean the abolition of the African Slave-trade, a cruel and barbarous traffic, which had been permitted to disgrace the land from the reign of Henry the eighth to that of our third George.

This was accomplished principally through the persevering efforts of Mr. Wilberforce ;—a deed of mercy and justice too long delayed, and brought about at last, at a great pecuniary sacrifice, by that strong moral force produced in the nation at large by the softening influence of our pure and holy faith. But though poor negroes were no longer torn from their native land, crowded in slave-ships, and carried away to work beneath the whip of the sugar-planter, without the hope of ever again returning to their country, those who were already slaves were not set free by this act of parliament. This final triumph was reserved for the reign of William the fourth ; and now the moment that a slave sets his foot on land beneath British rule, he is free. And what were all Napoleon's blood-stained battles, when compared with such a deed of justice and mercy as this ? Oh that as a nation we were more generally awake to our high privileges and responsibility. "To whom much is given, of them shall much be required."

In this little history, my dear children, we have traced the progress of true religion in our land, and have seen that, with the knowledge of it, every thing that is "lovely, and of good report," has sprung up and flourished. We have beheld our heathen ancestors

emerging from gross darkness and ignorance—we have marked the light gradually breaking in upon them; and then obscured for centuries by the mists of Popish superstition, till now it seems to shine forth in all its meridian splendour. If this be so, let us remember the words of Isaiah; “Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee;” that is, rise from the sleep of indolence, selfishness, and indifference, and “let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

And now let Aunt Anne solemnly ask her dear young readers, and beseech them to ask themselves, whether the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, which is shining all around them, has shone upon their hearts, and dispelled that darkness, ignorance, and selfishness, which they all have by nature.

Be not satisfied, my dear children, with bearing the Christian name, unless you bear also the Christian character, and exhibit in your daily conduct, those “fruits of the Spirit” which are the only evidence that you are really born of God, and may therefore confidently look to him as a Father and a Friend.

And think not that you are too young to promote the glory of God. If you earnestly pray to Him for

Jesus Christ's sake, to give you His Holy Spirit, you may daily gain the victory over self; you may be dutiful children, affectionate brothers and sisters; you may also do much, young as you are, for your poor neighbours, and even for the heathen world, if you will but deny yourselves some little indulgence, and watch for opportunities of usefulness.

It is Aunt Anne's earnest prayer for all those who read this little work, that, by the blessing of God, it may not only interest and instruct their minds, but influence and improve their conduct, and that "amidst the sundry and manifold changes of the world, their hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found." Thus may each young Christian prove himself a faithful disciple of his Holy Master, and—

"Tell to all the world around,
What a dear Saviour he has found."

FINIS.



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